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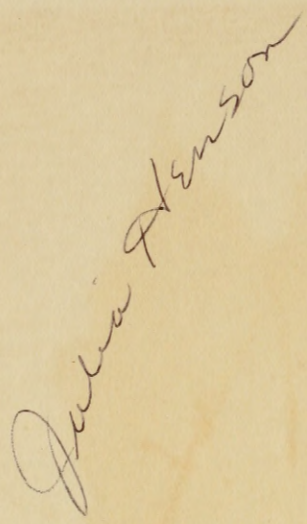
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# The Cross in Faith and Conduct

BY
THE REV. GORDON WATT, M.A.

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# FOREWORD

When one has had the privilege of listening to Gordon Watt he has himself received a quickening "foreword" which leads to an earnest hope that such messages may be brought into available form for a more permanent usefulness. Mr. Watt has passed through deep personal experiences that have given rise to a passionate purpose to search the Word of God for light upon the daily realities of the Christian life. It is this element of reality, and the facing of problems belonging to all of us in common, that make memorable such conference addresses of his as one is permitted to hear.

In these studies the Cross is seen in its relation to faith, and to the daily life. Here one is not allowed to turn away from the Cross, or to seek an explanation or a strengthening of faith in anything less than the Cross, and indeed in such a phrase as "co-crucifixion" Mr. Watt challenges the heart and the mind to define and to apply the identifying of the believer with the crucified Saviour in a common life and a common victory, through the death and resurrection of One who took our place.

I think one of the most blessed characteristics of this book is the extremely personal way in which the author compels one to face the facts so far as they apply to one's own life in these difficult days. I believe this book will bring fresh courage and clarity and assurance in Christ to many a needy Christian; and as it is made known by its readers to those who are not yet in Christ, it should have a definite ministry in the lifting up of Him, who, if He be lifted up, will draw all men unto Himself.

PHILIP E. HOWARD.

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# I

## THE CROSS AND THE RESURRECTION

"Here on earth a temple stands,
Temple never built with hands;
There the Lord doth fill the place
With the glory of His grace.
Cleansed by Christ's atoning Blood
Thou art this fair House of God."

In every aspect of the Lord's life the Cross was seen. It was the center of His earthly existence. Every thought was colored by it, every act was related to it. It was the goal of His life. It became the crown of His mission. It was the frequent subject of conversation with His disciples and the theme of His last words to them, but you have noticed that He never spoke of His death without linking it on to the certainty of His resurrection. These two facts are inseparable in the Christian life—death and resurrection. If we see only the death side of the Cross we are in danger of breeding an unhealthy spirit of introspection and creating a lop-sided Christianity. On the other hand, if we lose sight of the place and purpose of the death of the Lord Jesus and emphasize only His resurrection, we put ourselves in the way of leading deceived Christian lives because there are elements in our characters which can be dealt with only by the Holy Spirit through the death of Christ in practical ways, and we so much need a well-balanced Christian life.

What is true of the physical frame is as true of the

spiritual life. In the body there are going on at one and the same time a death process and a life process. Each day old tissue has to pass away and new tissue be created, otherwise the physical frame would break up. If we could arrest the death process in our bodies we would create as much disorder as though we arrested the life process. The same thing is true in regard to spiritual life—we cannot have the one thing without the other, and just in the measure in which the death process of the Cross is carried out, so do we enter into the experience of what the life process of the Cross means. There are some Christian people who want the life without the death, but we cannot tack on the Christian life to the old Adam nature. So we require to have a well-balanced Christian life and a right outlook upon the future.

Now, turn to Matthew's Gospel for a starting-point—chapter 28, verses 5 and 6: "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

Two facts are here united, one past, the other present —He was crucified; He is risen. What does resurrection mean? What does this word which the angel uses imply when it is said, "He is not here; he is risen"? Simply this, that the Lord Jesus was done with dead things, He was beyond death, in another atmosphere where everything was new and where He was alive, and in the wonderful vision which He granted to John in the Isle of Patmos, that was the fact He emphasized: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; behold, I am alive forever more." Here is the mark of the life on the resurrection side of the Cross, in which the death of the Lord Jesus has been

efficacious, it is done with dead things. Is that true of us? Am I as a believer really done with dead things? How many of us carry about dead things with us—things which belong to the grave, which have their root and source in the old life, and which we never seem to think it is necessary to get rid of: dead things, like temper, the spirit of jealousy, or some other form of the self-life. Then, the world gets cause to scoff and stumble.

How are we to get rid of those things that we all know are such an encumbrance to ourselves and such a hindrance to other people? Through the Cross. In what way? I am sure we have often learned a lesson from nature—in the Fall we see the leaves of the trees changing color. That change means death, but death in preparation for new life. What causes the death? The tree has begun to put a barrier between itself and the leaf. Hence the leaf is cut off from what it has fed on, and so begins to die and wither, eventually falling off. As we allow the Cross to stand between us and what are dead things, elements in our character and forces in our nature belonging to the old creation, their power goes and they wither and pass away. How much the Holy Spirit has need to bring the Cross into our lives, dealing with those forces and elements that are the source of so much trouble and grief, of difficulty and division, among the children of God! How much need we have to let the Holy Spirit take us down, down, deep down in practical experience into the death of Christ! How then does the Cross do this work in bringing about this deliverance? Let us turn to some passages in the epistles of St. Paul, to whom, more than to any other writer, the message of the Cross was revealed, and who worked out that message in his own experience before he went to proclaim it to the nations.

How does the Cross do this work so as to lead us into resurrection experience?

The answer to begin with is Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." The Cross first of all works not by self-crucifixion, which is an impossibility, but by co-crucifixion, which is an accomplished fact. On that fact you and I are to stand for a life of deliverance and victory; on this fact that two thousand years ago the Lord Jesus Christ dealt with the old man, the old creation, the old Adam nature, which is the source of all weakness and failure in life and in service, and when we stand on that fact it calls for an act from us—an act of faith—in the eleventh verse: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The important word in that verse is the word "reckon," that is the act of faith, that is our part in entering into the experience of liberty from the domination of the old man. I reckon myself to be dead to sin, I reckon that the old self is no longer my master. I refuse to acknowledge its mastership. I choose to say "Amen" to God's verdict upon it and moment by moment, day by day, take up the attitude of refusing to respond to its call, and to its demand that I should yield to its influence and obey its pressure toward sin. The moment I take up that position and act my faith, I put between myself and the old man all that is meant by the Cross, by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as I do that I shut off from the old man and from every habit by which the old man makes itself apparent, the power by which it has fed and been kept alive, to find that I am dead to it, and it is powerless to hold me. That is the first step of victory in deliverance.

Now, that attitude of mine—by reckoning myself dead to the thing which tries to assert its supremacy in my life because it belongs to the old creation, by that attitude I open the door for the Holy Spirit to come in to me with the power of God, bringing to me the very opposite force by which the old man has assailed and endeavored to cripple me. Romans 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

It must constantly be emphasized that there is no experience of Romans 6:6 without an experience of Romans 8:2. One can never separate the fact of victory in life from the Holy Spirit and our co-operation with Him. I do not hesitate to repeat that it is my attitude of reckoning myself dead to sin which makes it possible for the Holy Spirit to bring into my life the opposite grace, and so set and keep me free. It is this continual attitude on my part which makes death union with Christ effective, and to know sure deliverance from the power of evil there has to be the continual acting out of my faith in the fact of God that I am crucified with Christ.

I once stood on a platform with a friend who said, "This is in the Bible, but you never can experience it." What is the use of its being in the Word of God if I cannot experience it? But is it not because so many of the children of God are not experiencing it that their lives are so faulty? A victorious experience depends upon our standing on that fact of God, then doing this act of faith and maintaining this attitude until the attitude becomes a habit, and no one will ever know what it means until he begins to do it and then keeps on doing it. To lead us to that point is the plan of the Holy Spirit, so turn to Romans 14:12, 14, "The night is far spent, the

day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." And to have it clearer, look at Colossians 3:5, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth."

Now, if the Cross is to do this work and we are to know resurrection life, there must be the practical, daily attitude of watchfulness and obedience to every inspiration of the Holy Spirit. On nothing does Paul lay greater emphasis than this, that without our co-operation, co-crucifixion becomes a mere theory and the way is blocked for the life of Christ entering into us. There are things we must do, to make the way of victory practical, that God never will do for us, and one of these things is to put off the old man, put on the armour of light, mortify our members and make no provision for the flesh. Let me give you an Old Testament illustration in 2 Chronicles 32:1-8, showing how we are called upon to act in order to give practical effect to the help of the Lord. It is the story of Sennacherib encamping against Jerusalem, and Hezekiah in great distress, as well as in great wonderment as to what he should do. To defeat the enemy and win the victory, there were certain things which he told the people must be done. We read that he took counsel with his princes and mighty men and cut off the water supply from the Assyrians. If ours is to be the victory we have to stop the supplies for the enemy. Of what use is it to lock the front door if we leave the back door open? If something in our lives is allowed to remain on which self feeds, which we refuse to cut off, at that point is it possible for us to be defeated.

The second thing that he did was to repair the wall

which had been broken down, and many Christian men and women, to get victory and deliverance, have to go back to the point where they first missed the way, and having rebuilt the wall of faith and loyalty, become very careful as to the use of the means God gives them.

We are also told that Hezekiah gathered together all the arms he could lay hold of, and we too have a great armory, in Ephesians 6. In the 20th verse we read that he began to pray. And to go back to the 8th verse, he depended upon God, "With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah." Now all that the king did led up to that act of dependence upon God, and without their obedience and co-operation God would not have been able to help the people. We shall find that the Cross as a fact in the Word of God and in the world's history must become a factor in our lives, and when it does it sets up a barrier between us and the things of the old life, shutting them off from everything on which they can feed, lessening and weakening their activity, while at the same time the enemy is robbed of his power over us. In the purpose of God the Cross in all the wonder and depth of its divine meaning will never be a power in us until we have allowed it to become the mighty practical factor God means it to be.

And what is the death of Christ to result in? Let us turn to Romans 6:5, and I will quote it from Conybeare: "For if we have been grafted into the likeness of his death, so shall we also share his resurrection." The two things are linked together, the one is the consequence of the other. Read also the 8th verse, "Now, if we have shared the death of Christ, we believe that we shall also share his life."

The sharing of His life is our blessed experience just in the measure in which we share His death. So many of us are content merely that the Cross should be the power to save us from the penalty of sin, but death was not the end of the manifestation of Christ. It was resurrection, and it is the risen life, shining forth in the believer, that alone can carry out the purpose of God in redemption. The believer, in whose daily attitude the mark of resurrection is seen, becomes what the world is looking for, a convincing witness to the power of the living Redeemer. Note then what the logical outcome of the resurrection is—the 4th verse (Conybeare): "With him, therefore, we were buried by the baptism wherein we shared His death, that even as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we likewise might walk in newness of life."

That word "walk" refers to our testimony before others, embracing all the daily activities of life, the people we are touching, the circumstances and the crises of the day, our manner of looking at others, of thinking of and acting towards them. It has to do with our buying and selling, all the experiences of life, whether they are what we call religious or secular. The purpose of our union with the Lord Jesus is that we should walk in newness of life, as the outcome of His death and resurrection. Only thus can the world see and know Him. What, therefore, is the message of the resurrection? "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (v. 22). I quite recognize that there might be many objections to the life we preach in connection with the Cross and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some young person may say, "Well, if I were to yield myself

wholly to the purpose of God, I might lose my personality and become just a mere machine." Read this verse again and you will see that the Cross and the resurrection of the Lord give you the only free atmosphere in which you can develop your personality, for you exchange the bondage of self for the liberty of Christ.

Or again, some one might argue, "Well, I do not think such a life as this will be remunerative—it won't pay to live like that." Read the verse again, "being set free from sin, you have passed into the service of righteousness," and is there any service in the world in which one can get such wages as in the service of righteousness?

But another has this difficulty, "Full surrender to God will mean that my life may become empty of everything that at present makes it full." Read this translation of that verse, "But now, that you are set free from sin, now that you have passed into the service of God, your gain is consecration, and the end of that is life eternal."

"Your gain is consecration"—what is consecration? We often misinterpret the word and say it means to stand up in a meeting and yield everything to God. No, that is not the meaning of consecration. It means coming to God with empty hands. And what is the result? He fills them, and then we have something to give.

"My hands were filled with many things
Which I did precious hold
As any treasure of the king's
Silver or gems or gold.
The Master came and touched my hands,
The scars were in His own;
And at His feet, my treasures sweet
Fell shattered, one by one.
'I must have empty hands,' said He,
'Wherewith to work my works through thee.'"

Oh, empty hands can gain so much.

There may be still another objection, and it is this: "That life you are speaking of, it seems to me, is an unfruitful life—a dwarfed life." Read this translation: "But now being freed from the bondage of sin, and enslaved to the service of God, your fruit is growth in holiness, and its end life eternal." "Your fruit is growth in holiness," literally, the fruit which tends to produce holiness, and as that is what we have been redeemed for by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the conclusion is that the life of yieldedness, the resurrection life, can neither be unremunerative or unpractical or empty. The message of the resurrection is freedom in life and fruitfulness in service. Turn to 2 Corinthians 13:4, and you find another message: "For although he died upon the Cross through the weakness of the flesh, yet now he lives through the power of God. And so I, too, share the weakness of his body; yet I shall share also the power of God, whereby he lives."

Just look at this as the result of the death and resurrection of the Lord. The very life which is now in the Head at the right hand of the Father flows down into the members of His body, and as it has free action in their spirit there is an outflow of rivers of living water. The power is not in our faith or faithfulness, not in our surrender or energy. It is in the Head; but the measure in which He can give us to share in that power and life depends upon our lively faith, our constant faithfulness, our unreserved surrender, our carefully watched obedience, and the men and women who know how to receive life from the Head are those who are controlling the situations in the world, in the home, in the church, in business, in every department of the daily life. As we receive that

life from the Head, the Holy Spirit will wield through us the power of the finished work of Christ and make His victory on the Cross a reality in our experience, and no limit can be set to what God may effect through the believer who thus receives life from the Lord.

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:4). There is another result of the resurrection. Its life cannot be cabined and confined and cribbed. It must have an outlet, and one of its features is seen in the spirit which wins new victories and realizes new positions to take for Christ, which looks out for new ways of serving Him and manifests a strong initiative, because it has caught the vision of God for the world. It is the spirit that Rotherham has called "push and go," not in arrogant selfishness that is heedless of the feelings of others, but in an aggressiveness for the right against the wrong born and nourished by the Holy Ghost. The resurrection life aims at the throne because there it will reach maturity and lay its trophies at the Redeemer's feet.

Lastly, let us turn back to Matthew and read this further message of the resurrection which the risen Christ through His Cross desires to make real in your lives and in mine: "And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you" (28:7). Our Galilee! The risen Christ is there. Daily He goes on into Galilee, and there He says we shall find Him, whether our Galilee is Africa or China or America, whatever it stands for—our home, our business, our church, our mission field, there we shall see Him, the risen Christ with the power of the victory of the Cross, for, the risen Christ and the risen Christian are never separated. For those

who are willing to enter into the meaning of the Cross and the plan of God, who are pressing on to know Him in His fulness, and follow Him and be true to Him. His presence is always a certainty.

Let us judge our lives by the message of the resurrection, which gains all its power from the Cross. Are our lives free from the domination of the old man, free from dead things? Are they receiving power from the Head at the right hand of the Father to live out His plan? Are they pressing on the upward way? Is there the consciousness of the Presence with us in our Galilee? Then let us live the resurrection life, for it alone can tell upon the world for God: but never let us forget that we can only do that in the measure in which we are allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us into and keep us in death union with Him.

## II

## THE CROSS AND THE ASCENSION

"No more Veil! God bids me enter
By the new and living way—
Not in trembling hope I venture,
Boldly I His Call obey;
There, with Him, my God, I meet
God upon the Mercy-Seat!"

We are to study in this chapter the Cross and the Ascension of our Lord. In the preceding chapter we saw that there is a very close connection between the death of Christ and His resurrection—He was crucified: He is risen, and through the Word of God we learned something of the meaning of the resurrection in the daily life of the Christian. The power of the resurrection you and I can only experience in the measure in which we know in practical ways the death of Jesus Christ. Just as the Holy Spirit is allowed to work into us what is meant by the Cross, we enter into and understand what is meant by being raised with Christ and living with Him.

There is as close a connection between the death of Christ and the ascension of our Lord. That there is no gulf between these two events we shall see if we turn to the epistle to the Hebrews, 10th chapter, 11th verse, which should be read for the sake of the contrast with the 12th verse, "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one

sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." The proof of the work of the Cross being complete was given when He sat down. In the old Levitical priesthood the priest never sat down, because his work was never finished. He was constantly offering sacrifices which never could take away sin, although they were God's appointed channel for bringing to the nation forgiveness for the time being. These sacrifices had to be offered again and again, but this Priest, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down. On the Cross He said, "It is finished." At the right hand of the Father He sat down. What is the message of the ascension, what has the ascension done for the believer on the ground of the Cross? This: it has given him a share in the place and power of his Lord, "And in Christ Jesus he raised us up with him from the dead, and seated us with him in the heavens" (Eph. 2:6).

On the ground of the Cross, the ascension has seated us with Christ in the heavens. Just as the Cross through the new birth makes certain for the sinner a new condition of life, that of a child of God, so the Cross through the ascension makes possible for the believer a new position. The Cross which set Christ far above all has set the believer in Christ far above all, and there is nothing adverse in your life or home or church or business that may not be under your feet because it is already under the feet of Him who is far above all, and you are in Him, seated with Him, in the heavens. There is nothing which cannot be overcome by the believer in his daily life because of the victory won for him by the Lord Jesus on the Cross. In union and co-operation with the risen and ascended Son of God, that victory is assured, provided the believer stays in his position. The message of the resurrection is one of

freedom and fruitfulness in life. The message of the ascension is position, and position is everything. In politics that is true. The leaders of different parties are constantly maneuvering for position. Position is everything in the church. Men will do anything to gain position, and some pay a heavy price for what they gain. And the same is true on the material battlefield. The opposing generals are bent on finding out the strategic position. In Christian life and conflict it is not different. Position means power, strength, security. And so all the strategy of the enemy is applied to bring the believer down from his position in practical ways. When that happens he has lost the fight.

Turn to Nehemiah to get an illustration. We see what the enemies of God's people sought to do: "For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands" (6:9). Is this not a picture of the deliberate, persistent, unwearied purpose of Satan with each believer, namely, to bring him down from his heavenly position and thus weaken him? Whenever Satan succeeds in that, he defeats the object of the ascension of our Lord, so far as our witness and service are concerned. The late Rev. Evan Hopkins of Keswick once said, "Satan's aim is to get you if possible to quit faith's position [seated with Him]; the moment you quit it you are under his power." How watchful then would we require to be over our thoughts and motives and desires—over the things which claim our affection, as well as the attitude we take up and manifest towards people! How often we are brought down by little things! Satan's greatest victories are not won by big attacks, in what we call the crises of life, but by little things which unnerve and harass and irritate

us. Far easier is it to meet a great crisis than ward off a pin prick of the enemy.

Satan is always in the position of crouching, ready to spring on the believer. Snares for our feet, attractions for our eyes, influences for our minds, deceptions for our spirits, forces approaching from all quarters—these are some of the ways of working by which he seeks to bring us down from our ascension position, *but he cannot unless we will.*

And here is a tremendously solemn fact—*we can bring ourselves down.* In what way? If we carefully examine the first records of the Christian church we shall get a marvelous picture of the stratagems of Satan. It stands to reason that if he were to attack the new position created by Calvary and Pentecost, he must do it very soon, before that position became strong. That is exactly what he did, and the weaknesses, manifested through his stratagems in the early Christian church, are with us today. Let us turn, therefore, to the Acts of the Apostles and note a few of these clever wiles of the enemy, for only as we recognize the perils of the Christian life shall we seek, through the Holy Spirit, the power of the Cross and the inspiration of the ascension to live as victors. "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price" (5:1, 2).

That was the first attack upon the Christian church, and the meaning of it is a defective consecration—yielding our whole life to God, except the one thing: professing to dedicate everything to Him, but mentally reserving something; confessing the right of Christ's claim over us, but in some way holding back from the practical acceptance and acknowledgment of it in our lives. The temptation to consecrate ourselves up to a certain point

and to think that is sufficient is not uncommon. To stop a little below the point to which God is directing us, is to leave a chink for Satan to come in, and thus we keep back part of the price. The Greek word which the Holy Spirit has used is a tremendously strong word in our modern language—it means embezzlement. Now, just think of a man when he embezzles trust funds. We know what the world says and what the world does, and the enemy in a very clever way seeks to get us to embezzle something that belongs to God, to embezzle spiritual funds which have been put into our hands in trust for Christ and the world—life with all its powers, its potentialities, its possibilities. The moment we yield to such a wile of Satan, we go down.

In Acts 6:2 we have another stratagem of the enemy: "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables." Fortunately the apostles saw and escaped this stratagem, which was an endeavor to cause the apostles to be taken up with God's second best. It was right to serve tables, but not for the apostles. They were ordained for service far higher than that. Do you not see the picture? Do you not see how it is possible for a believer to engage in a work, perfectly right, and yet miss God's highest purpose? How it is possible for a believer to be content with a view of life lower than that which God has shown him? to seek after only the second best? Whenever we choose something, in itself quite right, but not what God has made plain as His desire for us, we come down. Where we decide to do a lesser work than that which the Holy Spirit has pointed out to us, because it is going to make fewer demands upon us, upon our time and energy, upon our money and com-

fort and convenience, we are being dragged down, choosing God's second best. Sometimes in my travels I cross a bridge in coming to which the train lessens its speed and simply crawls over it. On asking the reason for this I was told there was nothing wrong with the foundations, but some of the stones had not stood the weather test and they were getting a little bit crushed. When we do not stand the tests of life and begin to slow down, to take the easier road, unwilling to follow the path God is pointing out to us, we are leaving behind our high position and God fails to get the best out of us. Let it be our prayer that we may never choose the second best—that we may get God's best for us, and so not disappoint Him.

In chapter 10, verse 14 we read: "But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." In the trance into which Peter fell when on the roof top, he saw a great sheet wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, and heard a voice saying to him, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." "But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." Do you see what we have here? It is one of the cleverest, subtlest stratagems of the enemy, the possibility of having a narrow conception of divine purposes and *your spirit in the grip of a prejudice*. There are few things which give Satan a greater advantage over us than prejudice or bigotry. Satan feeds these things and works through our dim vision and our narrow idea of God's plan for man. It will always be found that when we become prejudiced against some one it lessens our spiritual vitality, distorts the mind, magnifies trivialities. and hides the good. Only one place exists where we can see aright what God is aiming at, and that is the

place of fellowship and communion with the risen Christ. It is fatal to true Christian life and the accomplishment of God's work to look along the dead level of earthly customs or the opinions of others, or judge circumstances and facts by the standard of personal likes and dislikes as in the case of Peter. The right view of men and events can only be obtained as we let the Cross do its work against everything in us which savors of prejudice and narrowness, and yield ourselves to the ascension spirit which gives the true vision of God. In that light we discover His plans.

Look now at Acts 15:4, 5: "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done unto them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Rising out of a narrow conception of God's purposes, words become large and we begin to emphasize non-essentials. In striving among ourselves about things not of supreme importance, which may permit of quite a legitimate difference of opinion, we come down and Satan trips us up. With the Pharisees it was circumcision; with men today it is something else. All things are right in their own place. It is only when there is given to them a human instead of a divine setting that they lose their proportion. If we are not to find ourselves deceived, may we be saved from turning Christian life into a catalogue of shibboleths, asserting that because a man does not see things as we see them, therefore he must be in the wrong. To give non-essentials an unnecessary emphasis may lead to division among God's people, bringing sorrow and sadness to them,

and robbing their witness and work of power and success.

Acts 15:36-39: "And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other." "The contention" —the Greek word is in our language, "paroxysm"—must have been very keen between these two old comrades in the faith. Do you not see here another wile of the enemy? It is to allow personal feelings to predominate over God's requirements. This is always sad reading, and how frequently it happens! It is one of Satan's pet schemes to destroy the influence and purpose of Calvary. In Scotland, our Covenanters fought a brave fight for liberty of worship and sometimes got sadly beaten. At the battle of Bothwell Bridge, as two of the leaders rode off the field, the one said to the other, "Not Monmouth (the commander-in-chief of the king's army) but our own divisions have scattered us." Let us remember this, that Satan is not only the liar, but he is also the schismatic, the instigator of division, and much of the trouble in the Christian church oftentimes is the result of wrong views that we have of the rights that are due to us. The moment we find some one standing upon his dignity and asserting his rights, we may be sure Satan has got a pull on him. As we hear a Christian worker saying, "I won't submit to this," and "I won't have that," we may be certain he is being dragged down from his position with Christ in the heavenlies. For settling differences among His children,

that is not God's way. His order is, "Settle them at the Cross," and there is no difference among God's children which cannot be settled if it is taken to Calvary. But the moment you and I begin to contend, as Paul and Barnabas did, we slip into the wiles of the enemy. That is one of his favorite stratagems in the present, as it was in the early Christian church.

Now, do we not see how it is possible for us to be brought down from our high position in Christ Jesus in practical ways, mostly by little things, and for the time being we are of no use to God.

The question therefore is, how are we to resist his wiles and keep our position? By yielding to the power of the Cross, God's great weapon through the Holy Spirit for giving us a complete victory. We are on strong ground for conflict and service as we stay up in close relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, resisting every attack and every stratagem of the evil one, and we stay up in our position just in the measure in which down here in our homes and business and work for God we are letting the Holy Spirit through the Cross accomplish His purpose in us. The great plan of the blessed Spirit is to bring everything that belongs to this big "I" into the place where it cannot influence or win, because that is the only way by which He can make our lives effective. The forms of that "I" are simply endless, and therefore we have to be alert and not offended as the Holy Spirit by some means convicts us. An offended spirit, resenting conviction and ready to fight for the rights of the "I," for the acknowledgment of the "I," is just part of that element in our characters which makes for weakness and must needs be kept under.

By all such methods Satan seeks to overcome the plan

of the death of Christ and neutralize the meaning and spirit of the ascension, and so through the Holy Spirit we must manifest the same deliberation of mind and will in resistance to Satan as he shows in the persistence of his attack. It was said of one of Lincoln's generals in the Civil War that he lacked energy of will, a fatal lack in a commander, but such a lack is not uncommon in Christian experience, and against the display of it we have to guard and put our wills in co-operation with the Holy Spirit to make His purpose through the Cross actual and real in its accomplishment in our lives. Each time we do that means victory. Each victory we win makes our position more secure, filling us with the ascension spirit, the pull-up spirit, which constrains us to seek the things which are above, which belong to the throne, and the search after them brings to us something of the strength and inspiration of the throne. That strength and inspiration will not cease until He comes and calls us to share the throne with Him. His ascension has cleft the way through the heavenlies for His children to the throne. His Cross is keeping the way open, and the Holy Spirit by the Cross and the Word of God and our co-operation in work and conflict, is bent on making us ready to go up the very moment the trumpet sounds. Let us therefore watch and be ready. Through these lives of ours the Holy Spirit asks for a clear right of way to fill us with the ascension spirit, to make our position in and with Christ real and secure, and work out His great plans through the Cross. He is seeking that now—a right of way through our lives. Shall we say, "I will"?

## III

## THE CROSS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

"Christ the light that fills the heaven
Shining forth on earth beneath,
Through His Spirit freely given
Light of life 'midst shades of death:
God, in tongues of fire descending,
Chosen vessels thus to fill
With the treasure never ending,
Ever spent—unfailing still."

The message of the resurrection was freedom in life and fruitfulness in service, and the message of the ascension, grounded on the Cross, was the strength of our position, and we found that position was everything in the Christian life. We are seated with Christ in the heavens, and while, of course, positionally we never can be taken out of it, for that position is absolutely and eternally sure, alas, in practical things we often find ourselves dragged down from it to our spiritual loss and to the grief of the Lord, and therefore the Holy Spirit is ever seeking, through the Cross, so to work in us that the things which might drag us down shall be dealt with and kept under our feet. Now, let us think of the close link between the Cross and the Holy Spirit. The foundation for the operations of the Holy Spirit is in the Cross. To make the death of the Lord Jesus practical to the believer and effective in his life is what the Holy Spirit has come to do. And we can see this quite clearly, that where He fails to carry out what He has been commissioned to

accomplish must have as its reason some refusal on our part to yield to His purpose and claim, and to co-operate with Him. In the Word of God one of the types of the Holy Spirit is water, and I wish to lead you to three passages in the Old Testament showing the Holy Spirit in close union with the death of Christ, to crown with true success His work in redemption.

First of all, Exodus, the 17th chapter, the 6th verse, reading from the 4th verse to get the context: "And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." Here we have a type of Christ and the Father's stroke in judgment upon sin. The rock was smitten, the fountain was opened and the water gushed out, typifying the Holy Spirit who was to be revealed at Pentecost. As soon as the rock was smitten the water gushed out. As soon as the work of redemption was completed, the Holy Spirit was given, and the work of redemption includes the incarnation of the Lord, His temptation, life, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension. That work completed, He sat down at the right hand of the Father and shed forth the Holy Spirit. Pentecost followed Calvary and is the complement of Calvary. The one is incomplete without the other. Calvary is the reason for Pentecost and Pentecost is the evidence that Calvary was successful. Whenever a sinner goes to Calvary and receives the Lord Jesus Christ as

Saviour, Calvary sends him on to Pentecost. Whenever he goes from Calvary to Pentecost and begins to understand something of the reason for the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit sends him back to Calvary. Calvary and Pentecost work constantly in co-operation, for they are inseparable in carrying out the great purpose of God. Only as we enter into an ever deeper experience of the meaning of the Cross can we ever know more and more of the Holy Spirit in His desire to dwell within us fully and give us His power.

These two great landmarks in God's redemptive work —Calvary and Pentecost—are never to be put asunder. The moment a sinner accepts the Lord Jesus Christ and receives the Holy Spirit, He begins to possess him and operate in him. Faith and will open the door into his nature and character for the Holy Spirit to enter. Before that, it is with him just as it was with the Israelites—there are unsatisfied desires, creating restlessness of spirit, wrong thoughts and dimness of vision, but whenever the eye of faith catches sight of the smitten Rock and sees there the inexhaustible supply that God has, will joins faith in appropriating and entering into the reality and the blessing of it. So through the Cross the Holy Spirit comes to the believer. Calvary and Pentecost are inseparable for the outworking of the plans of God, as they are indispensable for the equipment of the believer for Divine service. Calvary creates the worker, Pentecost empowers him. Never can we do without the Cross. Never can we live and serve without the Holy Spirit. But now notice the eighth verse—join the sixth verse to the eighth: "Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.

And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel . . . Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim."

*Then*—"then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim." That is the constant consequence of receiving the Holy Spirit. "Then came Amalek"—Satan will test every spiritual possession we have, as he will dispute every step that we take in the Christian life. There is no blessing for our personal comfort or gratification. All God's gifts come to us to equip us for the fight. The flesh is the sworn antagonist of the spirit, and never will there be any rest from the assaults of the flesh if we are going after the Lord, and therefore one of the most insistent calls of the Holy Spirit to the believer is "watch," be on your guard. Without watchfulness there must be continued falls. Old Richard Baxter once said, "A great part of our duty towards the Holy Ghost consists in joining with Him and obeying Him in His strivings with the flesh." Does not your heart say, "Thank God," when you hear that, because it means you are not alone in the fight? What an impossible outlook there would be for us if we had to depend upon ourselves as we come face to face with Amalek! It would mean constant defeat, with never any power to resist the assaults of the flesh or stand against Satan as he tried to stir up the old man to renewed activity. Is it not wonderful to realize as we go out to the fight day by day, in business, in the office, in the home, on the street, wherever we are, if we are following the Lamb, that there beside us is the Holy Spirit with whom we are to join hands. Unless we do that, there will be continuous failure.

When the Covenanters in Scotland were hunted among the hills and over the moors of the land in the days of religious strain and stress, and had their gatherings in

some hidden nook, they always placed a sentinel on the top of some hill to give warning of the approach of the enemy and enable them to find a place of safety. Is that not the word of the Lord to us, "See that you throw out your sentinel against Amalek"? We are in a fight. The enemy is aggressive. Throw out the sentinel of prayer. Cultivate the spirit of prayer and it will become to you not so much an exercise at stated seasons of the day, as a habit of the soul wherever you are. On the street or anywhere, be in touch with the throne. Throw out the sentinel of Bible study, not content merely with reading the Bible portion for the day, but really making the Book one you can use in the conflict as the Lord Jesus used it in the desert temptation. Throw out the sentinel of an alert mind and a sensitive conscience. Pray God to keep your conscience sensitive, for there is nothing so easy as to lose that, even on the part of the believer, and such a loss puts us off our guard. Alertness of mind and sensitiveness of conscience are among God's great blessings to the Christian man or woman. Throw out the sentinel of self-control, which most truly means God-control. As Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed to thyself"—the literal rendering of the Greek word is, "Keep a good grip of yourself." That we need as we pass through city and land and world, but we can only know it as over our hands are placed the nail-pierced hands of the Saviour. In such ways we co-operate with the Holy Spirit. I desire to emphasize this—there is no one so practical as the Holy Spirit. There is nothing theoretical about His dealings with us. He guides and saves and strengthens us through these things of which I have spoken: and thus we co-operate with Him. To fight Amalek He always uses the Cross, and the fight is continuous! "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for

a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" (v. 14).

There is no place for Amalek in the plan of God—that is, there is no place for the flesh in the plan of God. It is condemned, under the sentence and curse of God. God will have nothing to do with Amalek, except one thing: "For he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation" (v. 16). And never will that war cease until the Lord appears. So the fight with Amalek goes on, and as we watch and pray and keep fit, the Holy Spirit teaches us how to put the Cross between us and the flesh and how to wield the weapon of the finished work of Christ against the enemy and take from him in the fight deliverance and victory on the ground of the victory already won. As you and I keep step with the Holy Spirit, He gives us in our spirits the proof that He is in alliance with us, and as a consequence that continual, personal appropriation of all that the death of Christ stands for is imperative to continue in victory. A man once said to me, "Have we as believers a right to the constant application of the blood of the Lord Jesus?" And then he added, "The reason why I want to ask that question is that I heard a man say today that we had only right to the blood once and for all."

I said to him, "Do you notice the deception of Satan? What is the logical and intelligent conclusion to such a statement as that, that we need apply to the blood only once and forever, never again? It means there is no more sin in us, there is nothing more to be cleansed, and no more failure in our walk or in our lives."

"Well," he replied, "I went to that man and told him what he had said today is not tenable, not Scriptural."

It is one of the deceptions of the enemy to get people to believe that when they have applied to the blood for the first time and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, nothing more requires to be done: that the "old man" will never again trouble them. That is not what Scripture teaches and that is not what experience proves to be true. John, in his first epistle, says, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." If we are walking in the light, testing everything in the presence of God regarding our lives, our motives, the secret springs of our being, our actions, our desires, we shall see something tomorrow we did not see today in the light of the holiness of God. We shall find in experience that Satan will never cease his attempt to stir up the old Adam nature, with all its sinful tendencies and fleshly notions, and we shall come to know that the death of Christ in its efficacy has to be perpetually applied by the Holy Spirit and perpetually appropriated by us in order to give us constant victory and keep us in abiding communion with God. We shall see the need of constant cleansing and constant application of the precious blood to our lives and spirits. We may well pray that God will keep us from the deceptions of Satan, for they are so many today and not one more common than that to which reference has been made.

Now, let us turn to Numbers 21:16: "And from thence they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water." The children of Israel "set forward" (v. 10); "From thence they removed" (v. 12); "From thence they went to Beer" (v. 16). These verses link us on to the ninth verse: "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put

it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

After that wonderful miracle in the wilderness which is a type of Calvary, the Lord spake unto Moses, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water." We see that every blessing of the Lord is founded on and proceeds from the death of Christ. Each fresh experience of the power of the Holy Spirit is preceded by a fresh experience of the power of the Cross. Now, will you notice this? The water was underground—look at verse 17: "Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it." The water had always been flowing, but a certain work had to be done by the children of Israel before they could get it, and therefore in the eighteenth verse it is written: "The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves." The stream of life through the Holy Spirit has never ceased to flow from Calvary, and yet not always in fulness in our experience. The Holy Spirit does not constantly find it possible to do so. Why? Because the channel becomes choked, and therefore the command of God is "dig." So much sand has to be taken out of the channel! Excavations have continually to be made if we are to have the river flowing. Near my last parish in Scotland was a summer resort on an arm of the North Sea. A river flowed right past the little village and the action of the sea silted up the sand at its mouth, and the only way in which it could be made to do its work safely and rightly was by the government keeping a dredger continually deepening the channel.

That is just a picture in a small way of the purpose of the Holy Spirit with the believer. You and I know per-

fectly well how frequently things enter into our lives, things which hinder the Holy Spirit and block the channel. They have to be set aside. There seems no getting to the depths of the self-life. Such an accumulation of sand and grit and unwholesome things becomes apparent, and you find that each new unveiling of what the self-life is leads to fresh discoveries of what it is capable of. Do not let us ever think that Satan will leave us alone, that because we yield to the Holy Spirit as fully as we know how there will be an end to all attacks on the part of the great enemy. The more you go on with God in the life that He needs you to lead, the more clearly will be exposed to you the presence of the old Adam nature in its endless forms of working. That is why the Holy Spirit has revealed this immensely important truth through Paul, that the believer can never get away from the Cross if he is to live a true, fruitful Christian life. We can never do without that which the death of Christ alone can give us for the purification and sanctification of our lives, as we are led on into victory. Do not let us be mistaken. Only as we learn to apply the death of Christ in power to all these unveilings of the self-life, and take up the right attitude to them, can we stand free and enter into the fulness of life in the Spirit. I believe that the reason why many Christians know very little of the power of the Holy Spirit is because they do not know the power of the Cross at work in their lives. The two things are inseparable, the working of the Cross and the working of the Holy Spirit, and as you and I yield to Him, as we are willing to let Him have His way with us, then He applies the Cross to us to bring death to everything in our natures that would war against God, and to put out of our lives the sinful, selfish, unnecessary, unlovely and unwholesome things.

The Cross is the indispensable preparation for receiving the fulness of the Holy Spirit. When the princes and nobles of Israel digged, the water sprang up. Let us stand still and take it in. "Spring up, O well." Do you see the responsibility which rests upon us? It is to dig: not to supply the water. That comes from the fountain, out of the heart of the Eternal. It is to dig; that is to say, we are to ask the Holy Spirit to do in us what is meant by the work of the Cross. And as that is done, then we find what the Lord Jesus said in the days of His flesh becoming true, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink . . . out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." "And this spake he of the Spirit, for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." The more you and I allow the Holy Spirit to do what is meant to be done in us, the more we glorify Jesus in character and conduct, the greater hold the Lord Jesus gets of us, the more He shines out through us, and then comes in the fulness of the Holy Spirit. What we have to do is to take the sand away; see that you do it—the Holy Spirit will not do that; you have to do it. Take the sand out of your life, take the blocks away. Put aside the things the Holy Spirit is putting His finger on and saying, "You should not have that; that is not worthy of a Christian." Take the sand away and the water will gush out.

Now, let us turn to Exodus again: "And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" (38:8). This follows the first verse, where Moses says he made the altar of burnt offering. We cannot have the laver before that altar, and the burnt offering, as you know, was the ascending offering because the whole offering was laid upon the

altar. All the strength and richness and fruitfulness of Christian life depend on nothing being kept back from God, but in an act of full surrender all yielded up to Him. One of the distinctive features of this offering was that it was voluntary, a free-will offering. An offering given under compulsion could not be a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord. God never wants any pressed people in His service except those whom the love of Christ presses in. We give ourselves because we see He has a right to us through the blood and because we recognize that only as we are yielded to God can these lives of ours yield to Him the best for His service.

Now, the laver came after the altar of burnt offering, and it was for the daily provision of the priests. As they approached it they saw the stains on their feet and garments, and they recognized the necessity of having the defilement removed. Not one of us but knows his constant liability to sin. The Holy Spirit, therefore, has a great work to do to teach us how moment by moment to keep in touch with the blood that cleanses, and only when we do so do we continue walking in the light, in fellowship with other believers and in victory. How then does He keep us in touch? Of course, by showing us the defilement, making the conscience sensitive and the mind active in recognition and confession of sin. The laver was made of looking-glasses, from the mirrors of the women, and as the priests approached the laver they saw the signs of defilement. Is this not the type of the Word of God which the Holy Spirit is ever seeking to use in co-operation with the Cross and our own wills? Do you see what these three mean: the Holy Spirit, our wills, the Word of God—the threefold cord which cannot be broken in the great work that God has set before Himself of creating real and true believers?

The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and in co-operation with our wills makes it a looking glass in which He reveals ourselves. And there He shows us the contrast between what we are and what we ought to be, and as He casts light into all the recesses of our lives, holding up before us the Lord Jesus in all the transparency and purity of His character, what does that do? It leads us to confession as we see ourselves in the light of Christ. Confession leads us to the blood, and brings us nigh to God in deeper and closer communion. The only thing you and I have a right to in this world is the blood of the Lamb. And, thank God, we have a right to it every moment of every day, and we need it. Such is the provision for an abiding life in victory. Without the Word of God, the Holy Spirit could never convict us of sin. Without the Cross He could never correct sin in us. Do you see how the two things work and how the Holy Spirit is continually carrying out the Divine plan through these two agencies? The responsibility rests upon us. Are we willing He should have His way? Are we willing to follow as He leads? Are we willing to be what He would make us? If you and I can answer these questions humbly in the affirmative, then there is only one result: victory for us in life, fruit for God in our service and witness, and glory through the ages of the ages to Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

## IV

## THE CROSS AND INTERCESSION

"He, of old the Man of Sorrows,
Pleads before the Father's face,
Knowing all the needed solace,
Claiming all the needed grace.
Girded with the golden girdle,
Shining as the mighty sun,
Still His pierced hands will finish
All His work of love begun."

We have been dealing with the link between the Cross and the great facts of Christian faith and experience—the Cross and the Resurrection, the Cross and the Ascension, and the Cross and the Holy Spirit. The death of Christ, in conjunction with the Word of God and our human wills, as they are yielded to Him, is used by the Holy Spirit to work out God's great purpose in our lives. And now let us consider the link between the Cross and intercession.

Our starting-point will be Hebrews 7:25: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." It is not difficult to see the link between the green hill outside the city wall and the seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high. The efficacy of His work on the brazen altar of the Cross is being constantly perpetuated by His work at the golden altar before the throne, and He is able to save down here because up yonder at the center of all power He is living to make intercession

for us. Intercession is just one aspect of prayer—there are many aspects, such as confession, adoration, and supplication. Prayer is the general word that is used for what we mean by prayer. Sometimes I think one might put it this way—that prayer is doing business for God in the spiritual realm; intercession, which is one aspect of prayer, is rather doing business for man in the spiritual realm, as we are in touch with God. So here is the vision which the Holy Spirit through this Book permits us to catch of what is going on up yonder. The Lord Jesus Christ is busy at work at the right hand of the Father for those whom He has redeemed, and who have accepted His redemption. His intercession is simply the carrying on of His finished work on Calvary, for what is the basis of His intercession? 1 John 2:1-2: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

Because He gave His life in sacrifice for our sins, He is able to give His life in the service of intercession. There is therefore no break in the divine work of redemption—it continues in ceaseless power, because His holy intercession is simply another chapter in the story of the Cross, and when that story is unfolded to the gaze of the redeemed and understood by them in the light of eternity, what a record will be given of the miracles wrought by the Intercessor at the right hand of the Father. What is His intercession? It is much more than mere words, far more than really asking the Father for something for His people down on earth. It is a work. The meaning of the Greek word for "intercession" is to hit upon a plan for meeting one's need. Think of the intercession of the Lord

Jesus Christ in the light of that! Ever hitting upon a plan to meet your need if you are a child of His. The advocacy of the Lord never ceases for a single moment by day or night. You waken in the morning with a burden on your spirit, and you say, "I do not know how I am to get through this day."

Do you forget that He who is your Saviour at the right hand of the Father is hitting upon a plan to meet your need? That is what His intercession is, something intensely practical, just as you would expect in the work of Him who came to the Cross—hitting upon a plan to meet the need of every child of His in the world—and let me tell you this: He will never unfold that plan too soon, but He will never be a moment too late. We sometimes get utterly depressed in living the Christian life because we do not get a prayer answered just at once, but the Lord Jesus is never in a hurry, He never comes too quickly to our help. Why? Because He has so much to do in us before He can give us the answers to our prayers. He has a work to do in our natures and spirits before it is safe for Him to unfold to us the plan He has made. But whenever He sees the work of the Holy Spirit in us being completed, then you will find that in a very short time He comes to your aid and the way out of the difficulty is presented to you. But do not forget it in these days when it is becoming increasingly difficult to lead a true Christian life, that moment by moment the advocacy of your Saviour goes on, and He is hitting upon a plan to meet your need. Now, let me repeat this because it is so important—the basis of all that intercession is His death on the tree.

What is the claim that He makes upon us on the ground of Calvary and His intercession at the right hand of the Father? It is for a prayer partnership with Him. He

never relinquishes this just claim because of the purpose He has in view for the world, and because of what it must mean for the Christian in his personal growth and experience. Here we discover the link between the Cross and prayer. They are allies in the fight. Unless a man comes to the Cross and receives the forgiveness of his sin and reconciliation with the Father, he has no ground to stand on for any appeal to God. You and I have right to go into His presence, only on the ground of the shed blood of Christ. Think what a position men are putting themselves in who are turning their backs upon the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ! The only ground on which you and I can reach the Father is the ground of the precious blood. We have no right to go to Him on any other ground. There is nothing in ourselves on which we can base an appeal—not our own righteousness or our work or faith or earnestness, not even our own need, but only this one ground—Jesus died for me, therefore I have a right to go to God the Father. Now, the man who does not come to the Cross to receive what the death of Christ alone can give him has no ground for prayer, but having come there, unless he leads the prayer life he misses the greatest work for which he has been redeemed.

I beg of you to remember this, that the greatest work we, as believers, are called to engage in is that of being prayer-partners with Jesus Christ. We are not all sent forth to be partners with Him in preaching the Gospel, or in going to the mission field, but there is not one of us, the weakest, the poorest, the feeblest among us, who is not called into a prayer partnership with the great Intercessor at the Throne. What a comfort to those people who say, "What can I do? I am of very little use." Here is something you can do and ought to be doing, something that

God calls you to do, and if you fail to do it, you are missing the greatest and the highest and the most important part of your redemption. Without the Cross, prayer becomes a mere religious formality—without prayer, the Cross is arrested in its purpose. As the Cross works in us, keeping us in the place of death to every assertion of the old man, to everything in our natures and surroundings that is against God, our spirit finds a clear way up in to communion at the throne and a clear way out into conflict with our enemies. That is the double purpose of our partnership with Christ in prayer. Prayer is the spring of power in conflict, and conflict gives the proof of the value and need of prayer. It cannot be too frequently emphasized that for the believer, the ground or basis of prayer is the death of Jesus Christ, the sacrifice of the Son of God on the tree—the blood of the Lamb of God—the victory won by the Son of God on Calvary, just as the ground and basis of His intercession at this moment is His propitiation on the Cross. Away from the Cross prayer becomes nothing more than an ecclesiastical ordinance or a religious exercise expressed in devotional phrases; and I beg of you, when you read a book on prayer, to find out the place in it which the author gives to the Cross, and you will be able to estimate its value. Not improbably will you find books on prayer, advertised broadcast, full of the most beautiful phraseology, but without the Cross and the Holy Spirit, and will you tell me what kind of prayer can be offered to God that is not based on the ground of the shed blood of the Redeemer and is not inspired in the believer by the Holy Spirit?

Only as the believer keeps in touch with his base can he find prayer becoming an effective weapon in the warfare of the spirit against the powers of darkness, and therefore

in the working out of the purpose of God to its utmost value, certain things we must face in regard to the prayer life. First of all, we must not shut our eyes to hindrances to the development and strengthening of the prayer spirit. These come from two sources, the one being personal and the other Satanic. Let us look at a few instances of personal hindrances in prayer.

In Psalm 66:18 we read: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." The Hebrew word for "regard" means to give respect to. If I give respect to iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. What does it mean? If I give permission to sin to lodge in my heart, and no sin can lodge in anyone's heart without one's consent, if I side with sin when it is revealed to me by the Holy Spirit instead of resisting it, if I do not judge the sin that is disclosed to me, if I do not condemn it and cast it out, then God's Word says, "The Lord will not hear me." And here we can see the value of the Cross in the matter of prayer. It is only there that we can ever see sin in its true light, and the revelation of Calvary is the exposure of the awfulness of sin, its deceptiveness and power to blind us. But if God did not spare His Son to atone for our sin and to save us from it, have we any right to spare ourselves the pain of facing the things which the Holy Spirit reveals, and having honest dealings with our own sins? If we are to be real prayer-partners with Jesus Christ, we have to take ourselves in hand regarding the iniquities, the weaknesses, the sins of our own lives, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, or face the consequence of causing prayer to be ineffective and the Word of God to lose its edge.

Job 15:3, 4: "Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good? Yea,

thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God." A not uncommon hindrance to prayer lies in unprofitable talk. In what does it result? It leads to a spirit of levity, or trifling, a spirit that casts off in a very real and practical manner the Spirit of God, weakening the spirit of reverence and opening the way for other spirits to enter, giving Satan an advantage over us.

Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Think of any prayer being an abomination to God, and yet His Book declares it. That is to say, a hindrance to prayer is found in ignorance of the Word of God. That Word, interpreted by the Holy Spirit, is the only means by which the will of God can be known, and to turn from it is to create a gulf between ourselves and God which must of necessity make prayer of no value.

James 4:3: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures." A distinct hindrance to prayer is furnished by harboring selfish, unworthy motives.

These are only a few examples to show how hindrances to real prayer may come from ourselves through not dealing honestly with our sins, or being led into conversation that results in no good, or not studying the Word of God so as to understand what He means by prayer, or having some selfish, unworthy motive at the back of our petitions. To guard against these things, the Cross must do its work in us at every point where the Holy Spirit shows the need, and the nearer we keep in touch with Him, the more power we shall have over every obstacle, and the greater force we shall find prayer to be. These personal hindrances have an influence in the direction of opening the way for worse hindrances to block our path from Satan.

Never will he permit us to enter into a real prayer partnership with the Lord Jesus if he can prevent it. The prayer appeal, grounded on the death of the Son of God, is the weapon he fears more than any other. He will not interfere with any other work we do if he can keep us from real prayer. To a great extent the power of Satan in opposition to the children of God is concentrated upon the effort to push their prayer life into a corner of the day and prevent them from cultivating the prayer spirit which, as one even goes along the street, turns everything into fuel for intercession. The devil will use the most subtle wiles to hinder the work of prayer, taking up the time for prayer, interrupting us when we go to prayer, and pushing in all kinds of thoughts during prayer. The only way to prevent that is to give full power to the Holy Spirit to operate by the Cross in the mind, and then face Satan with the victory of Calvary, reminding ourselves and him of the fact that he is a defeated foe, that the purpose of God in Christ is to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8), and the purpose of Christ in us is to overcome him (1 John 4:4 and 5:4).

It is good therefore to ask the Holy Spirit to impress upon our minds the peril that comes from personal and Satanic hindrances. And as we come to understand the meaning of Calvary, that it is God's way of undoing all the effects of the Fall and bringing to fruition the great plan of grace in redemption, we shall more and more clearly see that, in co-operation with the Holy Spirit to this end, He requires us to persist in prayer, praying through the conflict and holding the ground we have won. There are three great requirements in prayer: We need to persist in prayer. If we could only understand perfectly what might be called the philosophy of prayer, we should under-

stand the value to God of this spirit of persistence. He needs us to pray through a conflict until we feel that we have reached a plane of victory. I remember on one occasion having a burden laid very definitely upon my spirit. I felt that I must pray, and pray I did until I recognized that I had got through. I knew afterward that I had succeeded—I found that the block in the way had been removed and the door opened for the Holy Spirit to do His work. God requires us to do that. And then He asks us to hold the ground we have won. Each one of us knows that hindrances, especially those that are Satanic, have a very depressing and discouraging effect. As we meet them and continue to meet them there is just the temptation to slacken in prayer and therefore it is so necessary to be clear on this point, that to pray on and through and hold the ground is our side of the partnership in prayer.

To give the answer and the victory is His side. Now it is here that the Cross comes into effect. To hold the ground we need not only to have a firm foundation on which to stand, and which the death of Christ gives us, but we require as well to have protection from the shafts and wiles of the enemy by which he tries to weaken us and make us give up. That protection is in the great armory which God presents to us in Ephesians 6, every bit of which gains its efficacy from the death of Christ and is for the man who knows how to wrestle in prayer. As we claim and appropriate what God gives, and stand, He does the work. What is holding the ground but simply the appeal to God to make the victory of Calvary real and full regarding what we have asked, and to stand in Christ against every possible power of Satan to prevent that victory being put in operation? Therefore let us not faint and be weary, for in due season we shall reap. That is God's

promise for prayer as well as for work, and He, the Holy Spirit, will teach us how to put the Cross between us and every hindrance in our lives.

A third fact of very great importance is that, as we realize the place of prayer in making the victory of the Cross real, we need to discover what will strengthen the prayer spirit within us, because every soldier needs reinforcements.

In a preceding chapter we turned to the early records of the Christian church to see the stratagems employed by Satan to bring us down in practical ways from our position in Christ in the heavenlies. Let us turn again to those records to realize how the prayer spirit can be reinvigorated. If at any time, surely then, we would find prayer in its purity and simplicity, and so it is. In the Acts of the Apostles we find what can develop and maintain the spirit of prayer so that prayer becomes a true ally of the Cross. Turn first of all to St. Luke's Gospel: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (24:49).

Connect that with Acts 1:14: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

And Acts 2:4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Here is the first means of reinforcing the prayer spirit, the connection between prayer and the fulfilment of the divine promise. The obedience to every command of Christ will lead us, as it led the disciples of old, to pray. Then shall we find prayer answered by the same gift of God, some new and blessed manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:42: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The spirit of unity always develops the spirit of prayer.

Acts 4:24: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is." Here is a great factor in increasing that spirit, to face our tests aright. Just look at this for a moment. In the surroundings of the disciples existed everything to create in them a spirit of bitterness and produce controversy between flesh and blood. That is one of the weaknesses of the churches today. Man will wrestle with flesh and blood, and not see that behind is concealed the power which is making all the trouble—oh, the time we are wasting fighting with flesh and blood! Do you see how these disciples acted? Threatened with imprisonment, they went into the presence of God and said, "God, deal Thou with these men." They faced the test aright. I think if Christian men and women in the church would understand this, that the fight is not with flesh and blood but with the powers of darkness behind, they would get victory sooner than in any other way.

Acts 7:59, 60: "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." That is to have the Lord's presence in life a reality, not a name, not a theory, not a historical fact, but a reality. Will not that strengthen the spirit of prayer in us?

Acts 8:14, 15: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of

God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost." To have the conscious sense of the need of others develops the prayer spirit.

Acts 9:11, 12: "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight." How the expectation that God is about to work strengthens you to go on in the prayer battle, and pray through and keep the ground!

Acts 12:5, 12: "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. . . . And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying." What made these people pray was the necessity of getting Peter out of prison. If you will think of that unsaved relative of yours as being in prison, a prison of sin, of Satan's bondage, there will come to you the vision from the Holy Spirit, pressing in upon you, of the need of getting that one delivered, and there will be a deepening within you of that which will take no answer except that of deliverance.

Acts 16:25, 26: "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them, And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." Nothing adds more to the value of prayer than the act of preserving confidence in God amid life's hard circumstances. What a wonderful victory for

these two men in the inner prison! They were not in tears. There were no groanings. No sign of distress was visible. Songs were heard by the other prisoners. A perfect confidence in God caused Paul and Silas to praise Him for what was coming, and the result of the song was the earthquake which threw wide open their prison door. Oh, to preserve confidence in God amid all the hardness of our lives! In the face of all the difficulty and darkness around us, may we clearly see God and know that all is well!

Acts 20:36: "And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all." To possess the fellowship spirit, so apparent in Paul, is to make prayer a great force for God.

Now, these are things which make for the strengthening of the spirit of prayer in our hearts, and that we need. Prayer is like any plant in the soil. It requires to be looked after, to be nourished, cultivated, and to have the right atmosphere in which it can grow. But not one of these helps in the prayer life can be experienced unless the Holy Spirit and the Cross are working in perfect harmony. If the intercession at the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ is based on His propitiation at the Cross, then it stands to reason that our lives can never be separated from the practical working out in them of that propitiation. The power of prayer depends upon the practise of the Cross, and here let me utter a warning. It is quite possible for Satan to nervously burden any one of us in prayer, creating an anxiety as to the answers to prayer, bringing about a condition of things where the spiritual poise of our souls becomes shaken and restlessness takes the place of quiet confidence. It is therefore necessary to see that we do not get out of touch with the Holy Spirit in His great aim of

making the finished work of Christ effective in our lives, so causing this prayer partnership to be inoperative.

I close where I began. The vision I long to have clearer in my own spirit, and in yours, is the vision of a prayer partnership, and not prayer that is merely individual, an isolated act of an isolated believer, but prayer that means joining with The Man, Christ Jesus the Lord, at the right hand of the Father. Rejoice in it. The greatness of the work to which God has called us through prayer becomes increasingly apparent as we move on in obedience to that call, but the responsibility of it as well grows more real. We therefore need to remember that three partners form this partnership. There is Christ, the living Intercessor on the throne: the Holy Spirit, the indwelling Intercessor: and the believer, the intercessor working out in daily life the great mission for which he has been redeemed. Calvary brings on to the battlefield all the mighty power of the finished work of Christ to lead us on to victory, and this is the vision. There on the throne is the Victor of Calvary. In these hearts of ours the Holy Spirit makes effective the power of that death, and then in the church, the business, the office, the home, the life, the believer, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and in touch with the throne, claims and proves the completeness of what has been won for him, in witness for Christ and in winning men to Christ, for it is literally and eternally true that He is able to save down here all them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

# V

## THE CROSS AND THE THRONE

"Salvation, strength and wisdom to Him whose works and ways
Are wonderful and glorious—eternal is His praise:
The Lamb who died and liveth, alive for evermore,
The Saviour who redeemed us, for ever we adore."

In his epistle to the saints at Philippi, Paul draws aside the veil and shows us the magnificent climax to the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (2:9-11).

And what is the cause of this exaltation and adoration of the Lord which the apostle is so certain of being realized? "He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (2:7, 8).

These words make clear the link between the Cross and the Throne. The one could not exist without the other. The death on the tree has made the triumph of the Son of God absolutely certain. Not yet is He on the throne, but the day is coming when every knee shall bow before Him, and when He takes His place as Sovereign over the

universe of His Father, the world will have the undeniable evidence of the fact of the victory of the Cross, of the work done then in weakness and shame having been crowned with eternal success. Is it not blessed to think how each one of us, whether in the home or the foreign field, may help to bring in that day when He will receive universal homage? From the counsels of the Eternal it has gone forth that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall make its confession of His Deity, and nothing can prevent it. How it should fill our souls with glory and keep our hearts at rest when we remember that neither the schemes of the devil nor the apostasy of deceived men can prevent this from becoming a fact! Paul tells us that the position and the name of the Lord Jesus will demand and receive the clearest testimony of the world to His Lordship in a wondrous act of adoration.

Now, what is the relation of Calvary to the throne? What is the meaning of the throne? First of all, it is a place of judgment. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). Conybeare translates it, "We must all be made manifest without disguise." The solemnity of that thought behooves us to walk humbly, live obediently, pray earnestly, and labor effectively.

Later on, the throne will be a place of arraignment: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31). Before the throne the nations are to be gathered and judged. And still later, it will become a place of government: "Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall

sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech. 6:13).

On this throne will sit the only One who is both a King and priest, and then will come to pass what is proclaimed in Psalm 96:13: "For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."

As well as in Psalm 85:10: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

In that day the world will once again enjoy perfect rule. The throne therefore is first a place of judgment, then a place of arraignment, and finally a place of government. When the dominion of the Priest-King is established, and the Lordship of the once despised Saviour is acknowledged, it will be recognized that the work for which He gave Himself in death has been consummated.

How therefore can He reach the throne? When He has put all His enemies under His feet, He will sit upon the throne of government. With the nations standing before Him, as He drives Satan down into the abyss, He will reach the throne of arraignment. And in the gathering of His ransomed people to His presence, He will be able to take the throne of judgment. It is therefore through this last throne that He can reach the other thrones. Intensely important is it for the sake of the world and for His own sake, that the throne of judgment should, as speedily as possible, become His, because only then will redemption in the fullest sense of the word begin to be experienced. Not to lose sight of our responsibility, as believers, to make the great hope of His advent a glorious reality, is our solemn duty as it should be our constant joy: for by Christian life and service can His appearing

be hastened or hindered. If we yield to the outworking of the great purpose of His death, soon shall we see the day of His triumph. What is that purpose? "For to this end Christ died, and lived again that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living" (Rom. 14:9, Conybeare).

"That He might be Lord," more than Saviour, more than Intercessor, even Lord: and the Lordship of Christ over the believer is the key to the Lordship of Christ over the universe. In this day of grace the plan of God is limited to the believer, and therefore the call of the Cross to him now is the call to a practical acknowledgment of the claim of the Saviour to be Lord. Let us consider this in a simple way. If the Lord Jesus is to reach the throne, I have got something to do with it. That brings it home to each one of us in a very practical manner, for it not only shows that we never can divest ourselves of the responsibility of being fellow laborers with Him in Divine plans, but that He is counting on us to fill such a place of service. Without us He can do nothing, as apart from Him we are helpless. He calls us therefore into this great work of partnership with Himself so to live that through us forces may go out tending to the accomplishment of His desires. What am I—what makes up my being? In what realm of life am I to accept and acknowledge Jesus Christ as my Lord? There is no possibility of any other answer than that Calvary has purchased the whole man, and everything in the believer's life is necessarily within the jurisdiction of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet at this very point controversy arises not infrequently between us and the Lord. Are there not certain realms in which we have no objection to the authority of Christ, for example, in the great concerns of life which

we feel are too mighty for us to deal with? Then are we glad of a strong, controlling hand and a perfectly wise heart. But are there not other realms in which you and I are not so willing to acknowledge His sovereignty, as in the details of life, in those matters which cut cross our own notions and prejudices, our likes and dislikes? And the question is, How far is the Cross to go in our lives? What, after all, are the rights of Christ in and over us? How deep are we prepared to allow the Holy Spirit to go as He seeks to make the meaning and purpose of Calvary real to us? These are searching questions. Let us look a little more closely at them. What are the demands of Christ as Lord, keeping ever in view the fact that He is aiming at the throne and needs a path along which He can reach it, that path being cut out by the lives, as well as by the service and loyalty, of His followers?

I. The first thing that makes me, is my mind. And over it the Lord Jesus Christ claims authority, if we are to know the Christian life as it can be known, and if He is to show forth His power in and through us as He ought to be able to show it. What does the apostle Paul say? "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

For the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in our minds, there is a clear need. Why? Because of the Fall. In what has it resulted? The apostle answers in plainest language. "But I fear lest, as Eve was beguiled by the craftiness of the serpent, so your imaginations should be corrupted, and you should be seduced from your single-minded faithfulness to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3, Conybeare).

That is the natural mind of man, a mind without Christ, not under the control of the Holy Spirit, a corrupted mind, that is to say, a mind biased in the direction different to that in which it was originally meant to tend, and therefore a mind not harmonizing with the mind of God. In Romans 8:5 that mind is further described: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit."

The unrenewed mind is fleshly, carnal, hostile to God, and in 1 Corinthians 2:14 yet another revelation of it is given: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Incapable of spiritual reception and perception, the mind of man requires renewing. How is that to be done? Much is said today about thought-control and auto-suggestion, and it cannot be denied that one of a certain temperament might be in some small measure benefited by such treatment: but the real problem concerning the mind is, Who is to be supreme in it? All present-day systems of mind-cures are simply attempts to meet a clamant need by human wisdom and make men better without Christ. They are mere palliatives. Never can they be permanent sources of victory. These are revealed only in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is inevitable that the best formula of man's intellectual creation must break down, because nothing human affords a perfect secret for any need of man. Here we reach the center of the whole matter. In all these remedies, the weakness lies in their failure to recognize three facts:

1. The condition of the human mind by nature and apart from grace.

2. The part which Satan can play still in thought control.

3. Failure to recognize God's remedy and God's cure.

The renewal of the mind makes it essential to recognize Satan's hold on the mind through sin, for the battle in Eden was fought there. Eve gave up her mind to Satan. He poured the poison into it, and the stream has been flowing ever since. The moment men drop speculations and theories, and are willing to face the factors in the actual situation, they will find themselves turning to God, longing for a remedy which they will discover in the Cross. In making this remedy practical, three powers have to be called into action. First, faith which sees the full victory of the Cross. Secondly, our will; and what is its work? On the ground of that victory, by a deliberate act it takes the mind out of the control of Satan and hands it over to the Holy Spirit that He may bring the power of the Cross to bear upon the old sin-touched and sin-controlled mind, and give instead a renewed mind. And the third power which has to come into action is the intelligent obedience on our part to every impulse of the Holy Spirit as He stirs us up to resist evil thoughts and forces, and take in the opposite grace as He presents it. The renewed mind is a great agent in the working out of these divine purposes which have as their object the seating of the Son of God on the throne. Oh, that we may seek this renewed mind because of what it will mean for Christ.

II. Christ claims the supremacy over the heart, for only as that is acknowledged and granted can He reach His goal. Now, what happens when the authority of Christ over the heart is recognized? In the fourth chapter of

Hebrews and the twelfth verse, clear light is thrown upon a matter of the greatest importance to the believer: "For the word of God liveth and worketh, and is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, yea, to the inmost parts thereof, and judging the thoughts and imaginations of the heart" (Heb. 4:12, Conybeare). The knife of the Word becomes the critic of the heart, and in the face of everything which it lays bare we can see the way to health and victory. With great emphasis the writer of the epistle affirms that the purpose of the Word of God, handled by the Holy Spirit, is to "divide asunder" two mighty forces in us, soul and spirit. The soul or the soulish part of our being perhaps can be best described as that in us which is purely natural and which refuses to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, while the spirit or the spiritual is that which is quickened by the Holy Spirit, becoming the channel through which He operates to manifest the life of God and accomplish His will. That is a very imperfect definition, but it may help us to understand the difference, and nothing is more necessary in Christian living than to know the meaning of those two terms, soul and spirit. All soulish work which is the outcome of the merely natural, apart from the Spirit of God, is a hindrance to Christ reaching the throne, or at least is no help. If the soulish is supreme in us there will be energy and enthusiasm, even sacrifice in the work of God, much of which men will praise, but there can be no fruit for God from it because fruit does not come from natural sources. "The God-Man in His earthly life had no sin in Him, yet He constantly refused to let His human emotions or affections shape His ministry: nor would He be led by His own unsullied intellect, apart from the revealed will of God.

He was the most dependent being who was born into this world; therefore, everything in His life was of God."[1]

But, we have within us to such a degree the taint of sin, the bias of the old Adam nature, that we fail to discern that much activity in Christian service is soulish, planned and guided by our natural powers alone, intellectual and emotional: and we require to recognize that just as we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, in the face of all work, to be taken down into an ever deeper experience of identification with Christ in His death, not only to sin but to the natural in us, both evil and good, can fruit be reaped for God. Let us not shut our eyes to the dangers of a soulish Christian life. "It is to the interest of the forces of evil that any element of the fallen life, whether fleshly or soulish, should be kept active, for as the believer becomes 'spiritual,' he more and more is united in actual spirit-union with the Lord of Glory, and hence more and more escapes the power of evil spirits, and becomes equipped to recognize them and war against them." [2]

There is but one path of freedom and safety, and in that path the believer must go in active and constant co-operation with the Holy Spirit. He must yield all his natural powers to Him for the Cross to do its work in them, and out of that act of surrender will come the pure spirit, begotten of the Holy Ghost, energized and operated on by Him. It is as the Cross touches spirit, soul, and body that each part of our being finds its right place and has the power to fulfil its right function. Supremely important then is it that we should be willing for the Holy

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[1] "God's Plan of Redemption," by Wm. McDonough, Brookline, Mass.

[2] "Soul and Spirit," by Mrs. Penn-Lewis, Leicester, England.

Spirit to search our hearts with unerring power, and deal with everything He sees in us that has upon it the mark of the old man. By that, Christ will find steps on which to mount to the throne. As you and I can only reach God through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, so can He reach His throne only through our dying to everything that the Holy Spirit reveals is only human, natural, soulish.

III. Christ must have authority over the conscience if ever He is to reach the throne. To enter into such an experience was the aim of the apostle Paul. "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16). A Christ-controlled conscience is a great factor in hastening the coming triumph of the Lord Jesus. The conscience which is not under the control of the Holy Spirit is always quiescent. Satan keeps it drugged. But a conscience under Divine authority is quickened, sensitive, responsive to every holy, impelling impulse. Conscience is often ignored in the believer, and something else is allowed to take its place. It can only get fair play as the Holy Spirit is recognized as in command of it, working into and out of it the great program of the Cross. When that is so, duty will never be left undone. The claims of Christ will not be shirked. Self-pleasing will not be the power which plans life's way. Responsibilities will be borne courageously and honestly. The late Professor Denny of Glasgow used to say to his students, "Crowd in conscience." It was a call to true, honest living. Christ expects that. The Cross commands it. The world needs it, and some one, who is looking at us, wants that to convince him that there is something in what we say, when we speak of the Cross and salvation. "Crowd in conscience!"

The Christ-controlled conscience is helping to bring in the day of the Saviour's triumph.

IV. But there is something else which Christ must control, and that is the will. What did He Himself say? "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). Supremacy over the will marks another of His claims, and unless it be granted one of the greatest hindrances to His work and the development of His plans meets Him. A yielded will brings in a flood of blessing. A hard, unresponsive will blocks God's path. The highest illustration of a will under supremacy is exhibited by Christ and He is our example. The imperative call of the Cross and the throne is for that; and only as it is acknowledged can the need of God in regard to the world be met, and the need of the world for God supplied. Only a yielded life can persuade other lives to yield. The soul in whom the Cross is accomplishing its work alone can bring other souls to the Cross, and God's call is for a yielded will to actively cooperate with Him. The Holy Spirit never says to the believer, Drop your will, but He says, "Put it alongside of Mine." Not by passivity does God work, but by activity —spirit activity, not soulish passivity, and the Holy Spirit requires us to join hands with Him in an intelligent manner in the face of the forces of evil and all the tests of life, being, as the Lord Jesus was, yielded up to do the will of God and to do it with the utmost freedom. Christ's supremacy over the will means our lives in safekeeping and under right guidance, co-partners and fellow-laborers with Him in His Father's purpose. By such a life Christ mounts upwards to the place from which He will govern the world and work out universal salvation.

V. Over one other part of our beings must Christ needs have control. Paul recognizes it, as he writes: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). The power of Christ to reach the throne can be hindered if there is not granted to Him supremacy over the body. In Scripture there is a double description of the body. First, it is the temple of God, then it is the body of sin. As the temple of God it is to be yielded to God; as the body of sin it is to be put out of action, mortified by means of the Cross as we yield to and obey the Holy Spirit. Let this supremacy be recognized, and at once we are made aware of the sacredness and serviceableness of the body so that we are kept from overcarefulness on the one hand and rashness on the other. The body is to be nourished, not nursed; protected, not pampered; spent in real service, not saved for indolence and ease. When Christ thus gets command of spirit, soul, and body, each part of the being finds its right place and fulfils its right function. The spirit, in touch with the Holy Spirit, disciplines the soul and makes the body fit for its work. How is it to be done? "For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you" (2 Cor. 13:4, Conybeare).

The power of God operates in us to make Him supreme, and cause us to live no longer unto ourselves but unto Him. With the whole man under His control, Christ will in due time reach the throne, and from it inspire and regulate every department and detail of life. There is but one Head, and as the body and will, the conscience, the heart and the mind respond in loving obedience to His

government, life will be fruitful in service and radiant in experience. Is there not a close link between the cross and the throne? God puts it into our hands. The advent of the Lord will only become a fact as each one of us allows the Holy Spirit to make God's plan through the Cross effective in our lives. Christ, supreme on the throne of the believer's heart, will reach the place of government, and from that place there will go forth to the ends of the earth His power and His influence to bring the nations to His feet to worship and serve Him, to do His will on earth even as it is being done in heaven. Then will the day dawn when in the fulness of gladness the earth will commence the anthem which will never cease: "the kingdoms of this earth have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

## VI

## THE PLACE CALLED CALVARY

"See the conquest and the triumph
Thou for me hast won;
Justice satisfied for ever,
All God's pleasure done.
Thus, O smitten Rock! from Thee,
Life Eternal flows to me."

"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left" (Luke 23:27-46). In such words of wondrous pathos does the evangelist depict the most momentous act in the history of the world. "The place which is called Calvary!" Have you been there? Not only for pardon, but for power, and to catch the vision of God's plans for your life? What we all need is to get back to Calvary and understand its meaning and yield to its purpose. The weakness of the churches and of the individual Christian life arises, I believe, in large measure from the limitations we have put on the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. We often speak and pray about revival and expect it to come, yet it tarries. Why? You cannot write up a revival. Neither can you get up a revival, and so much of what is called revival has the mark on it of got-up-ness. God is allowing it to tarry, I am sure, until churches and ministers, evangelists and Christian workers, are prepared to come back to the place called Calvary, and pay the price of a real revival. Cal-

vary is the one place where it can be born, and only as the purpose and power of the death of Christ is wrought out in our lives can revival break forth. It is Calvary, the spirit of Calvary, that creates the spirit of revival, and we must go there if we would hear God speak.

Now, for what does Calvary stand? What is its message?

I. It is the place where sin comes out in its true color. Nothing can be hidden there. Men discover the facts about themselves. There are no mists at Calvary. It stands outside the city and above the rush and roar of the world. Once there was a dense envelopment of darkness at the Cross, but only once. Ever since it has been bathed in the light of God's presence. To Calvary God is summoning men today. He is calling us to go there whose lips have so often spoken unadvisedly and to the hurt of others; whose minds have not been free of evil thoughts; who have again and again made vows to break them, and resolutions to forget them; who have gone to the Lord's table professing to be the children of God and have not lived like them beyond that table. He is calling us to come to Calvary who have not always played the game fair; who have missed the mark; who have allowed the fear of man so frequently to rob us of courage in our witness for God. He is calling us to meet Him at Calvary who have so often harbored a jealous spirit regarding others, and who have had mean and ungenerous thoughts about children of God. Whatever the sin and the flaw, the weakness and the failure, let us understand that we require to meet and deal with it. Only at Calvary can that be done. Let us go to Calvary and find it out. Calvary is God's finding-out place. The priests revealed

themselves in their true colors there, and what hypocrites, what cruel hypocrites they proved to be! Calvary is God's X-ray chamber where nothing can be hidden. Perhaps that is the reason why people hate the Cross and turn from it. It is God's earthly place of judgment, and sin must be found out there or it will be exposed at the throne. The man who does not hesitate to drag out his own sin into the light of God's presence and condemn it, judging himself there and seeking the refuge in Him whose hands were pierced for his salvation, will never fear to stand before the throne.

II. Calvary is the place of a heart-break. Have you noticed how full the Bible is of the records of heart-breaks? Think of Abraham when he led Isaac up to Mt. Moriah. Think of Jacob when word came to him that his son Joseph had been slain. Think of David in the face of the insurrection of his people, made all the more bitter because it was headed by his son Absalom. I wonder if David wrote then the Twenty-second Psalm. That is the sobbing out of a broken heart wrung with tremendous grief, and when he sobbed it out he did not know that he was sobbing out prophetically the deeper grief of a greater heart that would break at Calvary. There in darkness and loneliness, God's heart broke. You and I can never know what it meant to the Father to say farewell to the Son, and what it meant to the Son to bid farewell to the Father, and there at Calvary His heart broke. Let us go there and see Him and learn the meaning of the Cross. Calvary is the place where hearts get broken when they see themselves in the light of God, and the most beautiful thing in the eye of God is a broken heart. A sacrifice like that He will never refuse.

III. Calvary is the place where victory has been won and where things can be set right and deliverance experienced. Calvary means victory. It is God's way of spelling out salvation for the sinner, complete defeat for Satan, and freedom for the saint to live a redeemed, purified, Christ-revealing life. Oh, the joy to see the greatness of the death of Christ, and to recognize the glory which comes to the Lord Jesus Christ through being the Victor of Calvary, not only Saviour and Lord, but Victor! Saviour for sinners, Lord for believers, but Victor over His enemy! Do not let us hide this fact, that the death of Christ means triumph over Satan, for many of God's children are being gripped and deceived and imprisoned by him through some power and wile. That need not be, because through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, a complete victory has been won.

Calvary is the only place where these marvelous results can be obtained. Forgiveness of sin and deliverance from the wrath to come are not the whole purpose of God in the gift of His Son. The moment a sinner accepts the Saviour and begins to follow Him, his action is a challenge to the devil which he will never shirk, consequently the salvation of the sinner commences the conflict for the saint, and God's purpose through Christ is that the believer should win the battle. What causes conflict? Do you not see that it is the antagonism between the old man, the inheritance from the Fall, and the new man, the gift of the Holy Spirit through the Lord Jesus Christ? The assertion of the old Adam life, if successful, defeats the purpose of the new-born spirit, bringing the believer into the experience of bondage, defeat and failure, and causing him to cry out as Paul did in an agony of shame, "This is not life, this is death—there is no freedom here, nothing

but slavery." A man may be truly saved and yet have no triumph in his life. Little things trip him up. He sets out in the morning determined to win the fight, and before the sun has mounted high in the heavens, some fierce temptation assails him and he goes down. Many a believer is living a spiritually see-saw life, one day up, another day down; now winning, now losing; at one time singing, at another time groaning, and the heart becomes sick with dissatisfaction and cries out.

Is deliverance possible? Was there deliverance for Paul? Yes, listen: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Is that for you and for me? Yes. How? As the Lord Jesus Christ in His death dealt with the penalty of sin, so has He made provision for us in relation to the power of sin. How? Let us go back to the Cross and ask its message. What is it? Christ when He died on Calvary took the old man, the source of all our sin and trouble, to the Cross with Him. Why? Because the whole Adam nature, the unregenerate life of mankind, is absolutely fallen and God has to begin all over again. He must get a new creation if man is to have liberty from the dominion of sin and if God is to possess man. And so He declares that Christ in His death on the tree dealt completely and satisfactorily with the old man. The believer has died in Christ once and for all to its dominion so that now through the death and resurrection of Christ and co-operation with the Holy Spirit, he is in a position to master the old man and stand in constant victory.

Do you see it? Let me repeat it. God declares that Christ has dealt completely and satisfactorily with the old man. You, the believer, have died with Christ once and for all to its dominion, and through the death and

resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and your co-operation with the Holy Spirit in the daily life, you are now in the position where, instead of being a slave to the old nature, you can be its master and stand in constant victory. But do not be mistaken. That victory will only be realized as it is wrought out in your daily life in practical ways. That the believer died with Christ is a fact once for all true, but he can know the truth and the value of it only through a moment-by-moment experience as he chooses to stand at the Cross and yield himself to the Holy Spirit, reckoning himself dead to each assertion of the old man and the old man powerless to bring him again into bondage. But to say that the old man will never again trouble the believer is a deception of Satan and not proved true by experience. To recognize that the old man may be constantly instigated by Satan to attempt to regain in the believer the supremacy which Christ by death wrested from him, and then to learn moment by moment to wield the Cross against the old man in co-operation with the Holy Spirit is to find a weapon for victory that will render it powerless and defeat Satan. There is safety only in the Cross. Our strength lies in standing at the Cross and allowing the Holy Spirit to work in us and for us, God's meaning and purpose through it.

And when Satan tempts you, as he will continually do, to come out into the open and fight him in your own strength, you are to say, "Nay, at the Cross you were defeated. I choose to stay there. I refuse to own you as my master, I belong to Christ who has conquered you, and on the ground of His victory over you, I resist you and all your power." The moment that you appeal to the blood in relation to any evil forces in yourself or around you, their reign ceases. Is it not true that many Christian

people do not get victory in daily life, and is this not the reason? By their own efforts they are attempting to crush down the uprising of something evil in them. They set their teeth in a purpose of will that they will not give way again, to find that it works only for a very short time. Slowly, surely, the old habit worms its way into their lives again and they waken up to the fact that their resolution of will is weakening. Gradually the power of resistance slips away from them, and they go down before the old habit, the old temptation. Would it not be better to find out God's way of victory and take it? What is it? He tells you in His Word that the source of that evil habit is the old Adam nature which springs from the fall. You cannot get rid of it. You cannot deceive yourself into feeling that you have got rid of it. It will not be got rid of. But God reveals what He has done with it. It is on the Cross, that is to say, in the place where now it is possible for you to take up an attitude towards it that will enable you to resist its assaults successfully. What is that attitude? It is not that of repression or of suppression by an act of your will, by saying, "No, I will not give way; I will not act again as I did yesterday." Victory does not lie that way, but by learning to die to every manifestation of that sinful nature. God never tells us to try to conquer the old man, but to die to its power. He never tells us to try to conquer temper, but to die to it. He never tells us to try to tame the old Adam nature, but to die to it.

Do you see God's way of victory? It is so different from ours. Child of God, when next you are tempted to blaze out in temper, or use unguarded speech, or manifest a spirit which is altogether unworthy of the Lord Jesus Christ, will you not take up, by faith in the Word of God, your position in Christ, and say, "I die to that. I yield

myself to the control of the Holy Spirit in the face of that. Lord, make the Cross now real to me in its power to give me the victory." And the moment you take up that attitude, you give to the Holy Spirit the opportunity to bring in to you the life of Christ, with the opposite grace, thus setting you free and making it possible for you to be calm where you used to be passionate, and to hold your ground where you were so easily defeated. Then will you find that Christ is living in you, controlling and exercising His power in you. The whole secret of victory lies in the attitude that you have to maintain hour by hour as you assert your position in Christ before every onslaught of the devil and before every taunt that he hurls at you. When Satan throws his forces against you, send him to the Cross to meet his Victor, and you will discover he has urgent business elsewhere. Calvary is the place where the victory has been gained, and where things that are wrong in your life can be set right and you can experience the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free.

IV. Another truth about Calvary is that it is the place where a great claim is made upon us. What is that? "Ye are not your own." What are you living for? Whom are you living for? Who has the first place in your affections? Christ or your church? Christ or your denomination? Christ or your mission? Christ or your work? Christ or your business? Christ or your loved ones? The claim is, Crown Christ supreme. Crown Him, and your loved ones will be all the more precious to you. Crown Him and He will give you the right measure of prosperity in your business. Crown Him and He will bless your work and make you see His purpose through you being accomplished. Crown Him first.

V. Lastly, Calvary is the place where a great call comes to us. It is to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes. Are you and I willing to pay the price? In my first church, more than twenty-five years ago, I had many people strongly opposed to me because I preached the Cross. I remember one night one of the most prominent members coming to my house and strongly pressing me to change my preaching and ways of working. He told me of this and the other one who were about to leave the church, and said nothing could compensate it for their loss. It was not an easy position for a young man, just beginning the ministry. The next day I went for a walk and a little time of quiet meditation. There on the country road, the Lord Jesus Christ came near to me. If the veil of the material could have been rent, I know I would have seen Him. I was conscious of His presence at my side. I knew what it meant, and I said, "Lord, I have counted the cost; I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest."

I went back to my pulpit and preached the Cross. I saw that man's face grow grim and gray, and from that hour he was one of my strongest opponents. But what was the result? The Lord filled the church and gave me many for Christ. Young men and women came to my support, standing on the streets of my parish with me, helping me to preach the Gospel. Some of them are in the glory, others are scattered all over the world as heralds of the Cross. You cannot suffer, you cannot lose, if you follow the Lamb. Oh, are we willing to answer the call of Calvary? Are we willing to follow just where He leads? Shall we come to the Cross and have the wrong things put out of our lives, stop all the backsliding, end all the self-planning, and make Jesus Lord? He is waiting for us to do that. Calvary means everything to Him.

and He is there now with His nail-pierced hand held out to us as He says, "Come with me, and I will give you the power to be witnesses for Me."

"See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

Shall we answer:

"I take, O Cross, thy shadow
For my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
The sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by,
To know no gain nor loss—
My sinful self, my only shame,
My glory all the Cross!"

Shall we come to the place called Calvary?

# VII

## MARKED OUT

"Lo, we can tread rejoicing
The narrow pilgrim road;
We know the Voice that calls us,
We know our faithful God.
Oh, bliss to leave behind us
The fetters of the slave,
To leave *ourselves* behind us,
The grave-clothes and the grave!"

A wonderful description is given us by the apostle Paul of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he declares was "marked out as the Son of God, with mighty power, according to the spirit of holiness, by resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4, Conybeare). Now, what of us? Is it true that we are marked out as the children of God? We speak in common language of a man who has got a special mark on him, one who is a marked man, or who will make his mark, and we mean that he possesses some feature in his character or conduct which singles him out from the crowd. Ought that not to be true of each professing Christian? Have we any right to assure ourselves that we are the children of God, or take the position and privilege of children of God if there is not something about us marking us out as different from the rest of the people? And it is not talk that will do that. Let us see what marked out the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle tells us there were two things.

I. The first was His mighty power. In what direction was that manifested? In the days of His flesh He gave a threefold proof, not only of His power, but of His Deity. First, He had power over death, for you remember that He stood at Lazarus' grave as death's Master, and a few days later on the Cross proved Himself to be death's Conqueror. He was marked out by His power over death. And we? Is that true of us? As we go about our daily duties are we showing that we have power over death? I am not thinking of physical death, but of those forces which surround and assail the believer, and which, if not resisted and conquered, must inevitably produce death in character and in life. I am thinking of dead things like pride and prejudice and jealousy, which we, the professing children of God, carry about with us without ever seeming to think they should be got rid of. And the world scoffs and says that the Lord Jesus Christ does not give His people a full salvation. To be marked out as the children of God is to give evidence of power over everything which makes for death in our characters, because it is itself dead. How are we to get that power? Through the Cross. What is the Cross for? Our Lord does not bid His disciples live on a cross, but He does tell them to have the Cross living in them in its wondrous power. He does not encourage us to go through the world gazing at a cross, but He does command us to know the liberty which the Holy Spirit through the Cross can bring to us. What is the Cross for?

It is surely far more than merely to save us from hell and bring to us the forgiveness of sin. Do we not see that the Cross is meant to touch everything in life, character, and business, and in our ways of living and conducting business, that belongs to the old creation, becoming

material on which Satan can work and produce weakness in us? So does the apostle say with great emphasis, "Mortify your members," "If ye by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live." "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." But why is it that so many believers are going through the world dealing with things which belong to the grave instead of aiming at and possessing those which are of the throne? Do we not see that the Lord Jesus Christ must triumph in us over all such forces, if He, through us, shall triumph in others? We ought to be marked out as the children of God by our power over dead things.

Then, may we notice another fact that was true of the Lord Jesus? He had power over disease. The ailments of man vanished at His approach. As Son of God He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and whenever He came face to face with them in any one, giving proof of the devil's power through sin, a look, a word, a touch, and they were brought to nought, the fetters were snapped, men and women regained healthy bodies and minds, and the verdict of the world was that "He doeth all things well." He was marked out by His power over disease. Then what of us? Is it true? Amid all the circumstances of a day, touching the world in our business, are we marked out in its eyes as those who have power over disease? I am not thinking so much of bodily diseases as of others more real, more difficult to cure, more strong and dangerous in their operations and effects than anything which can touch with detriment our physical frame. If the flesh is heir to every kind of ailment, the spirit is liable to every attack of evil. There is not a physical disease mentioned in the Bible which has not its counterpart in the spiritual realm. Take three of the most

common ailments which the Lord met in the days of His flesh, and one from the Old Testament, and we shall discover four of the most common forms of spiritual troubles which the children of God have to face.

There was blindness, which, in a spiritual sense, affects the mind. In some cases it creates dimness of vision, whereby they are unable to discern the difference between truth and error, between Satan's wiles and the divine message. In other cases it distorts the vision so that people lose what they have and actually believe error to be truth, while they fall into all kinds of snares, mental and religious. Through the tampering with the spiritual vision by Satan there are not a few today who are being led into sympathy with modernistic theological views, without recognizing their perils and logical issues.

Then, as we think of the woman in the Gospel of Luke, who was bound by Satan for eighteen years, we meet a disease which affects the spirit. It is not uncommon in these days to find believers afflicted with such passivity that they are suffering in spiritual things exactly what that woman endured in her physical frame, bowed down, with no power to lift themselves up and exercise a living faith in union with the Holy Spirit. Passivity imprisons them, producing deep depression of mind, touching the spirit with a lassitude which renders them unserviceable for the time being, and even brings them into worse troubles. A missionary from India told me that this depression of spirit was so dreadful that she was often tempted to take her own life. Has Satan bound you, and are you not able to get free? He who delivered that woman can set you free and say to you what He said to her, "Woman, thou art loosed." He is ever present to speak the word of healing.

Another illustration of spiritual weakness is found in the disease of palsy, which, with its paralysis of the body, afflicted many in our Lord's day; and in that we discover a form of evil which affects the will in spiritual affairs so that there is an absence of co-operation with the Holy Spirit in fighting the powers of darkness and resisting Satanic attacks. The child of God, as long as he is a paralytic, is under the feet of the enemy. Not only is there no co-operation with the Holy Spirit, but this disease brings with it numbness of spirit, hardness of heart, stubbornness of will. A friend of mine told me that during the war, he went to call upon one of his church members to whom a great sorrow had come. All his endeavors to comfort her with the comfort of the Gospel were met by silence. Not the slightest feeling would she manifest, nor would she respond in any manner to his ministry. I said to him, "What should you do in a case like that?" And he replied, "I suppose pray for her conversion."

"No," I answered, "I do not think that is the way. You will never get the light into that woman's mind until you have taken the shutters off. You can see there is the grip of an evil power on her will, rendering her stubborn and producing this numbness of spirit and hardness. You must get that grip broken before she will ever respond to you or to God through the sorrow." What is happening to multitudes of God's children today is that this grip of the devil is on them and must be broken.

From the Old Testament comes an illustration of a spiritual trouble which touches not a few believers. It may be called "fainting fits" (Psa. 27:13), and these affect the heart. Do we know anything about them? Do we ever give way to spiritual fainting fits? When new and perilous circumstances manifest themselves, how quickly

we faint. When others do not take their proper share in the work; when we are not seeing results; when things are not going as we expect them; when we are up against altogether new conditions, how quickly we find ourselves in a fainting condition! The reason is heart weakness. The blood is not circulating rightly, there is something wrong at the center. A remedy is imperative because fainting fits, passivity, blindness and paralysis are perilous things in the Christian life, so perilous that through all these channels Satan can enter in to discourage and hamper and weaken the child of God, blocking his way and setting him completely aside from service. Let us, therefore, ask our own hearts, are we being marked out as children of God by our power to resist such ailments and stand free? Is that mark upon us today?

A third way in which the Lord was marked out was through His power over the forces of evil. At His approach they fled, and testified to His Deity. Had He been only a man, would they not have laughed at Him? Does any one think they would have fled before a man? In the Acts of the Apostles it is recorded that some men tried to cast out an evil spirit, and the spirit said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?"—and it put the men to flight. Oh, do we think if the Lord had been only a man, only a Palestinian Jew, only a great teacher, the evil spirits would have obeyed His commands? But whenever He spoke, they fled. If He found them in the bodies of men, He cast them out. As He met them in the winds and waves on the sea of Galilee, He said, "Be still," and muzzled them. When they flung themselves upon Him on the Cross, He broke their power, parading them unsparingly before heaven and hell, while He expelled their prince from his place of sovereignty in the world. And

we? Is it true of us, that in the face of the outrush of evil forces today from the pit, we are being marked out as victors? Are we able to beat them back and deliver the victims of the devil? In the conflict with Satan are we recognized as children of God by our power over the hosts of hell when they assail us and others? Do we know how to stop the devil in his work? We ought to know, and we could stop him if we did know. Demon activity will undoubtedly increase on the earth before the Lord Jesus Christ comes, and the children of God will be neither immune from its attack nor victorious over its assaults unless they know how to wield the weapon of the Cross, standing in victory against them, and translating that victory, which the Lord Jesus has won over the devil on Calvary, into reality in the actual battlefield of daily life. Jesus Christ was marked out by power as the Son of God. Is it true of us? Are we triumphant over spiritual death, spiritual disease, and spirit forces of evil? Are we being marked out from others by the possession of such power?

II. In another way was Christ marked out as the Son of God, and that by the spirit of holiness. Now, what is holiness? It is not a doctrine or a theory, a sentiment or a phrase. What is it? The word "holy" comes from the old Anglo-Saxon word, "hool," which means "whole," and holiness means the wholeness of the soul. It means a perfectly healthy spiritual life, under the sway and influence of the Holy Spirit, with Christ supreme in it. Such a life is possible for each one and is within the reach of each one. All that was true of Christ. Is it true of us? Are we not living in days of such extraordinary religious crazes and extravagances, that we need to be spiritually whole Christians, well balanced, sane, rightly poised in

thought and action? How are we to be marked out as men and women of power and of holiness? How was the Lord Jesus Christ distinguished in that way as the Son of God? What has given Him His place of supremacy in yielded hearts, and what will yet give Him His place of sovereignty in the world? His death and resurrection. These two forces the Holy Spirit uses to create believers mighty in power, true in holiness. The Cross leads us into death union with Christ, separates us from the dominion of the old man, and links us unto God. The resurrection through the Holy Spirit brings the life of Christ into our characters and natures, setting us free from everything that is evil.

We cannot do without either the Cross or the resurrection, for resurrection life keeps pace with the death process in heart and character. Let us forget the necessity for the constant application of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit to the evil forces in us and around us, and we deprive ourselves of the power for victory. Let us forget the message of the resurrection, that Christ is living in us to keep command of us, to control us, to live through us, and we lose the joy as well as the glory of victory. The more we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, the more He will lead us to know the meaning of the Cross, making us sharers with Christ in His death, and the more we enter into death union with Christ through the Cross, the more shall we know resurrection life in which our experience will be one of constant conflict but one of sure victory. Are we then marked out as the Lord Jesus Christ was, by power and holiness through death and resurrection? If that is not true of some one as he reads these words, He is living to set you free, and put you right. Will you deal with Him?

# VIII

## THE POWER OF GOD

"Girded with the golden girdle,
Shining as the mighty sun,
Still His pierced hands will finish
All His work of love begun."

In his first Epistle to the Corinthians (1:21), Paul affirms that unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God. Such is God's conception of His Son. If there is anything we require, it is power. The greatest need of the church today lies in that, and the danger is lest she look for power somewhere else than in Christ. In the preface to a history of the war by a former head of the British Admiralty, Mr. Winston Churchill, there is a sentence which contains a great truth: "One rises from the study of the causes of the great war with the prevailing sense of the defective control of the individual upon the world fortunes." These words I venture to paraphrase in relation to the church, and say that one rises from the study of the present spiritual situation with the prevailing sense of the defective control of the church upon the world. And one of the causes of that defective control is without doubt the effective control of the world upon the church. The church is losing power because she has lost the vision of Calvary, and the sad thing about it is that she does not recognize it. She has lost her touch with center things and is busy with those on the circumference, and her supreme requirement is that she may be-

come sensitive to her loss and rediscover Calvary. We may have anything and everything else, a crowded church and magnificent preaching, finest music and perfect organization, but if the word and power of the Cross are absent, we have nothing to touch the heart of the world, nothing to give to the man who has found himself.

And is not Christian living less fruitful than it ought to be because of its lack of power? Have we not all to confess it? How powerless we are against certain forms of temptation! How powerless when we try to impress some other one with the thought of his need of Christ, and with the fact of the ability of Christ to meet that need! Now, let us remember that this power is not necessarily intellectual, social, financial, or political, but it is Christ. Christ is the power of God, and have you noticed this picture which God gives us of His Son? The meek and lowly one of the Gospels, crucified in weakness upon the Cross, becomes the power of God in the epistles, and the conquering Lamb in the Revelation. That is God's conception of His Son.

There are two Greek words used in the New Testament for power; the one is *dunamis,* which means might, and the other *exousia,* which can be translated authority. The first word Paul uses. The Cross is the expression of the might of God. Young people have a habit of looking at older Christians with larger experience, and saying, "I wonder if I shall ever be like you." But, the explanation of every great Christian character is not experience, nor intellect, nor social position. It is Christ. And there is not a young life anywhere which cannot from this moment be a great Christian character. The secret of all Christian influence is Christ. It is of supreme importance to notice, therefore, that the essential condition for possessing, ex-

periencing, and manifesting the power, which Christ alone can give, is union with Him. Power is in Christ and apart from Him we can have none. We cannot preach if we are not in union with Christ. We can lead no one into Christian experience if we are not ourselves in union with Christ. We can never exercise Christian influence if we are not in union with Christ.

Where is the point where such union takes place? The Cross. God can meet us nowhere else except at Calvary, and if we will not meet Him at the Cross in grace we must meet Him at the throne in judgment. The Cross is the point of contact between God and the sinner. The one thing to which we have a right in this world is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, all that is meant by and included in His atoning sacrifice, and when we come "to the place called Calvary," God gives us everything. This union forms an unbreakable bond. When we received the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, the new birth became a glad experience. We thank God for every remembrance of it. How our hearts filled with joy and gladness in that hour, and we said, "I am in Christ and Christ is in me!" Union with God through Christ was a reality. Ah, but there is a closer and deeper union for us when we recognize our identification with Christ in His death. Oh, wonderful fact of mercy and grace! When Christ died on the Cross we died with Him, and now are in a position where we can be conquerors over everything in and around us which is against God and would hinder us from knowing His power. "Joined unto the Lord, one spirit," that is the marvelous description of the one who has come to the Cross, and in whom Christ has begun to live. And as he maintains this union with Christ in His death by yielding himself to the Holy Spirit for that death to be wrought

out in him in a practical manner, he knows what Paul means when he speaks of "Christ the power of God." The Cross is the point of contact, the spring of life, the hiding-place of God's might. As one has well said, "There is no way of getting into the blessing of pure life and communion with God unless you find it by the way of the Cross and keep it by the way you find it."

Now, how are we to receive this power? What hinders us from receiving it? Of course, our capacity is very limited. We can no more take in the fulness of God as it is in Christ than a child can carry away the ocean in his pail. But perhaps the great hindrance to our receiving the power of God is our unbelief. If our capacity to receive is limited, our capacity for unbelief is almost unlimited. What unbelieving believers we often are in practical ways! We do not get because we do not believe that we can get. Thank God, there is a way by which everything that is against us in our lives and surroundings, everything that has the mark of the Fall upon it, that has the evidence of the reality of the old creation in it, and is material for Satan to work upon, can be dealt with, but only as we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit that He may make real in us the power of the death and the resurrection of the Son of God.

In what manner then does the Lord Jesus Christ reveal Himself as the power of God? Let us turn to four passages in the Word of God which will answer that question.

I. In Hebrews 1:3, we read: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand

of the Majesty on high." The first expression of the might of God is made manifest in the power of Christ as He upholds us by His word. Not one of us but has had experience of that power, and not one of us but needs to have the experience constantly repeated. In the city of Dundee, in Scotland, many centuries ago, there was a tremendous visitation of plague, and as was the custom, the plague-stricken were put outside the walls of the city and attended to in booths by themselves. At that time George Wishart, whose name is written on the pages of Scottish history as a great preacher and reformer, proclaimed the Gospel to the sick people outside and to those inside, and on one occasion he gave this message to them: "He sent His word and healed them."

Have we not had experience again and again of the healing power of the Word of God? Do we not remember, when our minds were full of anxiety and we could scarcely think of what tomorrow might bring forth, how we went to the Bible and God said, "Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you," and the unrest vanished? Do we not recall that occasion when, faced with some great difficulty in our business, and with no clear vision of the way out from it, the Holy Spirit brought this word to us: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye upon thee," and our spirit was healed? Was there not a time at home when our hearts were gripped with fear and we could hardly breathe because of the sense of coming trouble, or possible tragedy? Then the Word of God came to us and said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and we left the valley of despair and climbed again into the uplands of life, strong for the conflict, with our hearts filled with a new confidence and courage. "He sent his word and

healed them"—and Christ is ever doing as much as that for His children, upholding them by the word of His power.

II. Look again at 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." The supplying power of Christ is a gracious reality, and never, in the experience of His children, has He been found to fail. The deeper our need, the fuller the measure of the supply which will emanate from Him. The generations of men have found it to be true. The ages bear witness to it. In our lives exists no need which cannot be met and matched by Him Who is the power of God. Only let Him live in us, only let the blocks be taken out of His way, and He will show us that according to His divine power He will give us everything that pertains to this life and to the next.

III. In 2 Corinthians 13:4, the apostle writes with great emphasis: "For although he died upon the cross through the weakness of the flesh, yet now he lives through the power of God. And so I, too, share the weakness of his body; yet I shall share also the power of God, whereby he lives, when I come to deal with you" (Conybeare).

Now, let us join those words with 1 Peter 1:5: "Kept by the power of God." The power of God in Christ is made real in the protection which He gives His children. No expression of that power is more necessary, for Christian life is a conflict increasing in its intensity with the passing of the days. All conflict means strain, and all strain creates danger. The daily environment of life, let it be the most commonplace, is full of peril, and the Word of God, with its crystal-clear vision of the weakness of

man and the subtle power of Satan, reminds us that at no point are we invulnerable, but that we require constant power to keep and protect us. In Christ lives that power in its fulness, but we need to claim it definitely. Do not let us take the keeping power and the protecting grace of the Lord Jesus Christ for granted. If we have been kept in one set of circumstances, do not let us assume that necessarily we shall be kept when these same circumstances recur. Fatalism is a deadly substitute for a living, co-operating faith. The power is undoubtedly in the risen Son of God, but we must claim and appropriate it. To live in such a way that it will be possible for the Holy Spirit to impart it to us is imperative.

A young believer said to a friend of mine one day, "I never ask God to keep me; the promises are there in His Word."

"Surely," I replied, "that is one of the most subtle wiles of the devil. This Book is full of the promises of God, but they are not ours independently of our faith." We must personally claim and make them our own by an act of faith, and Satan is ever on the watch to get us off our guard and send us to sleep, lulling us into a false security. Give him an inch and he will soon take an ell. Let him have the slightest opening in our lives and he will leap at it. He never misses an opportunity, and today he is either an angel of light to deceive us, or a roaring lion to devour us. It suits his purpose to get a child of God into a state of mind or attitude of spirit where he fails to exercise actively his faith in the risen Son of God. So do the apostles constantly warn us in the epistles, as they write, "Watch, be sober, be vigilant."

To claim definitely, day by day, hour by hour, step by step, circumstance after circumstance, the keeping and

protecting power of the living, ever ready, ever watchful Son of God is our responsibility. There is nothing we need today, as believers, in fuller measure than the protection of God for the body, or the devil will run us into an accident, or develop some physical weakness to set us aside from service for God. To claim protection for the mind is imperative lest through what we see or read or hear he inject a drop of poison which will work spiritual damage. We need to claim similar protection for the spirit, or Satan will bind it up in the prison of passivity, depressing and burdening us to a degree that will make prayer an impossibility. For nothing is this Divine protection more necessary than for the will. How many of God's children are being paralyzed in will-power, to find themselves robbed of all desire to fight against what is evil!

Every possible scheme of Satan through men and circumstances has to be dealt with in this way. We are living in a day when he is representing himself as an angel of light, blinding, deceiving, entrapping, gripping believers. And have you not noticed that he works by "wiles"? The Greek word is *methodia,* from which we get our English word "method," and with the most subtle cleverness he is working. In the New Testament three Greek words are used, full of interest and closely related. When, on the Mount of Transfiguration, the Lord Jesus Christ was in communion with Moses and Elias, He spake to them of his *exodos,* which means the way out. In the epistle to the Hebrews the writer uses the word *eisodos,* as he describes the way into the holiest. And when Paul is desirous of exposing the work of the devil, he does so by the word *methodos,* literally, the way which runs alongside another way, which is God's way.

Satan's way today runs parallel to God's way. It is a wile, a very clever wile. Wherever God is working we shall find Satan working alongside. When God gives His people blessing, Satan pushes in something among them that is soulish, hysterical, fleshly, with the result that there is exhibited religious extravagance in word and act. Then wrong doctrine, ill-balanced talk, separation, schism follow and the gain belongs to Satan. Day by day he works through counterfeits, cleverly wrapping up the false in a covering which resembles the true, giving to the undiscerning counterfeit holiness, counterfeit power, counterfeit manifestations of power, counterfeit evangelism, counterfeit conversions. Counterfeits are the only contributions he can make to the religious experience of men. A master in the art of deception, he makes his way run parallel to that of God. No wonder the apostle says, "Watch, be sober, be vigilant." No wonder the Holy Spirit desires to make Christian men and women alive with the power of spiritual discernment. Do we not therefore recognize how greatly we need to claim the protecting power of Christ against all possible schemes of the enemy every step of the way?

IV. Now, let us turn to Luke's Gospel: "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy." (10:19). We will join that with Ephesians 1:20, 21: "Christ . . . set . . . far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named."

Another expression of the purpose of Christ is revealed in the fact of His overcoming power. Authority to tread upon every manifestation of Satanic opposition is given us because we are in Christ and He is far above all prin-

cipalities. In the Moody Bible Institute a student came to me one day with this question: "Can a fellow get to the place where there is constant victory?" Can there be any doubt as to that? Not for a moment. The power that raised Christ and set Him far above everything, has also raised the believer and set him far above everything that is against him, if he will keep his position in Christ, and what the risen Lord says to every child of His on earth today, is this: "I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy."

Do we believe it? Do we believe that is as true for the twentieth century disciple as it was for the first century disciple? "Well," you say, "that is a big order." But is it true? Do we believe it? Marvelous it surely is that He has given to us power to tread on all the power of the enemy. "But," you say, "what about the serpents and scorpions?" Well, are there not different kinds of serpents and scorpions? They are not only to be found in our zoölogical gardens. Do we know the serpent which glides about from mouth to mouth, insinuating, whispering, adding a little to a story about some one until his reputation has been soiled and the atmosphere of suspicion envelops him?

The serpent's trail is seen all through life. And is there not sometimes a scorpion between our teeth—biting, stinging, poisoning? And Christ says, "I give you power over all these things, and over all the power of the enemy." What a magnificent equipment with which to go into the battle, as along the paths of business and life we meet the temptation of the enemy! What a strong position on which to rest! "I give you power over all the power of the enemy." It is blessedly true, even though we may not believe it. Yes, what the Holy Spirit has written in the

Word of God is for us to put into practice and find real, that as believers, because of the victory won on the Cross, we can place our feet on every serpent and scorpion and every manifestation of the power of Satan, and say, "I put you under my feet in the Name of the Lord Jesus." "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

Let me ask, How much does it take to bowl us over, in the day, to depress us, to put us out of tune? Is it a letter in the morning, or a cross word from some one during the day, or an unexpected happening in business and life? Does God find us a bit of rock against which the billows of temptation and testing and sin dash themselves in vain, or has He the sorrow of seeing that we are only little sand castles which disappear with the first incoming wave? How much are we worth to God in the day's work and in the day's fight? That there is nothing we cannot overcome is Christ's word of cheer to us, and the message of the Cross. The death and resurrection of Christ pledge victory for the believer. At Calvary the victory was won, and we are entitled to reap its fruits. To do that Christ gives us authority. Faith is the power to appropriate that victory at every point in the battlefield, claiming that what was done on the Cross two thousand years ago shall be made real to us here.

What was accomplished at Calvary? A perfect provision for our sin and the complete defeat of Satan through the channel of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is victory for us over sin; victory over self; victory over the flesh and the world and the devil. Nothing has been left out. It is complete, and God's declaration is that we are entitled to know and experience it.

Child of God, there is no force adverse to you in your life, home, church, or business which cannot be under your

feet because it is already under the feet of Christ and you are in Him. Only one thing He needs: that you will yield yourself without reserve to the Holy Spirit and let Him have His way with you. Then He will teach you the meaning of the Cross and give you the vision of the fulness of the victory won at Calvary, as He quickens your faith and will in regard to it. He will show you how to wield the weapon of the Cross in prayer, and control through that Cross the situation in the home and in the church and country and world, against every disturbing force, and He will cause you to enter into something of the glory of His triumph when He comes again. Shall we not yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, and say, "Have Thy way with me"?

# IX

## THE MESSAGE FROM THE CROSS

"God hath here on earth a treasure,
None but He its price may know,
Deep unfathomable pleasure
Christ revealed in saints below."

In the four Gospels there is presented to us a correct and inspiring picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writers see Him in a different light and from a different angle, each one perceiving in Him a different characteristic; and the four are required to give a perfect vision of the Son of God. In Matthew, He is king; in Mark, a servant; in Luke, the Man; and in John, God. Now, these features in the life of the Lord Jesus have their counterpart at the Cross. Matthew reveals Him as King, and on the Cross there shines out the kingliness of character. Mark writes of Him as servant, and in the last moments of His earthly life the true spirit of service is manifested. Luke causes Him to stand out before us as the perfect Man, making visible in His act of dying the highest spirit of humanity, while John, unveiling Him as God, reveals on the Cross His wondrous display of the nature and power of Deity. In a similar manner these four Gospels, as they give an account of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, bring to us a clear and suggestive picture of the Cross at work in a believer's life, each one emphasizing a particular feature which should stand out in the believer's relationship to things and persons, constituting tests of

the reality of Christian birth and character, and presenting a vision of what a victorious Christian life may be. Such a life is what every Christian may and ought to present to the world. It is what Christ is expecting every follower of His to show forth, as it is what the world is needing every believer to manifest.

Let us look at these four wonderful Gospels.

I. Matthew reveals the Kingship of the Lord Jesus. It is in the first Gospel that the Lord proclaims Himself as King, and unfolds the constitution of the kingdom. At the Cross there shines out kingliness of character. "Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth" (27:38-44).

In the last moments of His earthly life, that storm of scorn and ridicule He met in silence. What mattered it to Him? He was there to carry out the plan of His Father, and no act of Satan could hinder Him. Here is the revelation of the power of the Cross in the Christian life. Occasions are many in Christian witness when silence means victory. To learn that is one of the great lessons of life. To be still when everything tempts to self-

defense and self-vindication, to retort or repartee, is to know one of God's great means for carrying out His plan. The crucified life is a silent life. Not silent regarding the honor of God, or the work of Christ, but silent before every temptation to self-assertion. The crucified life never makes anything of personal grievances. It is not a petty life: neither is it self-opinionative. It is never marked by an imperiousness that rides roughshod over others. It is always bold for God, but never for its own interests. It is a lamb life with a lion heart. And the crucified life is never easily offended. To resent personal injustice is natural and forms one of the temptations by which Satan is ever seeking to bring us down; but silence in the face of provocation is no confession of weakness. The King was silent in such a position. One of the marvels about the Lord Jesus Christ was His restraint, being what He was. Good is it to remember that silence gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to work into us the spirit of Calvary, and under such circumstances as are depicted in this passage, to prove the power of the Cross in victory.

II. When we turn to Mark's Gospel, we find the King at work. On every page of this short evangel God's Servant is depicted in His busy life. As we scan the portrait, the natural expectation would be to see that spirit of tireless service shine out to the end of the day, and what does Mark record as happening on the Cross? He tells us of the taunt of the Lord's enemies. "Save thyself, and come down from the cross" (15:30).

Now, what did it mean for Him to be there, and to remain there? He had swept His foes from His path before this. He could have come down with perfect ease, and scattered them again, but His presence on the Tree

was His witness that to the end of His career on earth, He was true to the great purpose of His Father. He came to minister, to do good, to heal the sick, to redeem man, to open the way for the world to reach God, and to that object He bent every energy of His spirit right up to and on the Cross. All through these three and a half years of public ministry, Satan had with unwearied persistence striven to keep Him from the Cross, and in this closing moment of earthly existence he flung at Him his last and fiercest dart: "Save thyself, and come down from the cross." And the answer of the Servant of God was to stay on the Cross and let it work in His body the plan of His Father which the fall of man had made necessary.

Do you not see the power of the Cross in Christian life? The constant temptation in the path of the child of God is to shirk the Cross. Satan is very busy today in two ways with remarkable success. He is busy keeping sinners from the Cross, and to that end he is creating in many of the pulpits of the church a conspiracy of silence about the death of Christ. He will let the sinner be as devout as he pleases, as religious as his emotions will allow him, if he can prevent him from hearing about an atoning Saviour. Success to a lamentable extent is marking his endeavors, for the pulpit in many instances seems to be giving itself up to the proclamation of everything but the one message for which it was brought into being, to proclaim salvation to lost, dying men and women, and create saints for the glory of God.

In another direction Satan, with as great success, is busy in the work of keeping the Cross from saints. To shut its power in practical working out of believers' lives is his aim, and to accomplish it he will never object to human energy and activity in the service of God if he can

successfully fling the temptation in the path of a child of God to save himself and shirk the Cross. Have we not noticed how often and in what wonderful ways this temptation met Christ in His earthly life? If we will study those occasions we shall understand how strong the temptation can be to avoid what the Cross means and how it may meet us. In Matthew 13:57, the temptation is not to offend relatives; in Matthew 16:22, it comes from the pressure of others; in Mark 3:21, it is the fear of being counted strange or extreme; it is presented in Mark 4:37-39 through the possibility of physical danger; in Luke 4:29, the fear of the anger of others which might lead to unpleasantness; in Luke 8:37, it is the personal rejection of the Christian with the effect of discouraging him from further efforts and cooling his enthusiasm; in John 6:15, the snare of popularity. Let us look carefully at these passages and we shall find that the temptation to shirk the Cross is not an imaginary one.

These perils are very real. To all who follow the Lord, these experiences are common, and each one marks a deliberate effort on the part of Satan to turn us from the purpose for which we have been redeemed. Have we not known these things? Are we not facing one or other of these temptations daily? Do we recognize the secret, determined meaning in each one of these happenings? It is this, to get us to shirk the Cross and be untrue to God. "Come down from the cross" (with the added bait), "and we will believe him." The Greek word, "come down," is derived from a root which means a descent from the base. Each time we shirk the Cross we get away from the base, from the source of power; and that is the plan of Satan. That is the strategic purpose of the enemy. Only one power can bring us the victory, an equally deliberate

determination on our part to let the Cross be all in our lives that God means and needs it to be, to yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, to resist every attempt of Satan to weaken our loyalty to God and lessen our strength to be true to the purpose of salvation, receiving from Him grace to go right on to the end.

Do we not remember what the Lord Jesus said to His disciples? He says it to His followers today: "Behold, I give you power to tread upon all the power of the enemy." Such an attitude as that He claims we shall assume before every temptation to shirk the Cross, to refuse the call to sacrifice, to shrink from a position that may prove inconvenient and costly. Frances Ridley Havergal very beautifully says: "Why, this is grand; power over all the power of the enemy; just where he is strongest there we shall prevail; not over his weak points and places, but over the very center of his power; not over his power here and there, or now and then, but over all his power, and Jesus said it; isn't it enough to go into battle with?" The Lord Jesus said it. Do we believe it? "I give you authority to tread upon all the power of the enemy."

III. Luke, as we know, reveals The Man, and in the manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ we have humanity at its highest and best. What God meant man to be from the beginning is shown in the earthly life of the Son of God, and what man may in measure be today is disclosed by the character and conduct of the Lord Jesus. Now, look at The Man. What was the distinctive feature of this divine humanity? The exhibition of a perfectly right spirit under every condition. Since there was no flaw in His character and no failure in His conduct during His lifetime, might we not naturally expect that spirit to be

visible to the end? And so it was. On the Cross true humanity shines forth.

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots" (23:34).

"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (23:43).

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (23:46).

These three passages paint for us the mind and spirit of Him who "was made in the likeness of men." The first proclaimed the forgiveness of enemies. The second showed a response to the need of another, though He Himself was in great distress. The third revealed His complete confidence in His Father. That spirit God requires to shine out through His children. That spirit the world expects to see in them. How can we manifest it? Not naturally can it be exhibited under trying and difficult circumstances. Humanity unaided must fail in the face of such tests. The greatest and the best reveal flaws. The holiest and the saintliest life is liable to yield to the temptation of retaliation or of resentment. How are we to have within us such a spirit as will mark us out from the world?

There is a way of victory. There is a possibility of showing the true Christlike spirit under all conditions of life, and of rising triumphant above our surroundings and the forces which assail and irritate and sting us, and that through the Holy Spirit operating in us. For that purpose has He come, so to work in us the death process of the Cross whereby the spirit of self, the very opposite of the spirit of Christ, instigated by Satan, can be kept under

and a true human life lived for the glory of God, making the world say, "Christ is living; I see Him in that man, in that woman."

A foreigner, struggling with our English language, and asked to parse the verb "love," parsed it as the perfect tense of the verb "to live." Was he wrong? Is not love life perfected? Thank God, there is provision for us in the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit to meet resentment and reviling, selfishness and distrust with love. The power of Calvary is proved there. The reality of saving grace is made perfect there. The glory of Christ to transform lives is seen there, and the world stands still before that vision, in its despair and hunger, saying, "Thank God, we have seen something of Christ today."

IV. The message from the Cross is very wonderful, and in the last chapter of it John leads us to the heights. On eagle's wings we mount up into the very presence of Deity. The fourth Gospel shows the Lord Jesus as God, and what is the essence of the spirit of God in relation to man? Is it not sacrifice? God gave His Son. His Son died for us, and that spirit ran right through His life and ministry from the manger to the green hill outside the city wall, from the incarnation to the crucifixion. On the Cross what is the fact which stands out as true? A striking example is given us by the apostle: "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (19:26, 27).

The motto of the life of the Lord Jesus, as it was the

purpose of His humiliation, is expressed in one word—others. "He saved others." All through His days, even in hours of hunger and thirst, when weary and tired, His heart went out to others. That is the meaning of Calvary. It is God thinking and planning for others. So on the Cross the love of His heart glows in the care for His mother, a picture of the thought in His mind for the whole human race. The message which comes to us from the Cross is complete and holds a full measure of power. It is the beauty of silence in the face of personal injury. It is the greatness of standing true to the purpose of our Redemption. It is the glory of expressing to the world a right spirit. It is the joy of service for others. Calvary demands that we should live for others, that we should yield ourselves to the fullest purpose of the Holy Spirit for others; that we should be willing to sacrifice ourselves and know inconvenience for others.

"Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
Not light them for ourselves."

The children of God are in this world to be sweet and make it sweet: to be enlightened and give it light. We have been redeemed not only to be the salt of the earth but the sunbeams of heaven as well. We are here to have Christ living in us and living through us. The world has heard of Calvary. It is still waiting to see exemplified in the spirit and lives of the children of God what it has heard, and the more that spirit is manifest in you and me, the more powerful will be our witness to the world. Do we not see that it is the spirit of the Cross which will break down opposition in the home, and church, and social circle? It is the living expression of the Calvary character that will convict others of sin and need, soften-

ing hearts and ending the paralysis of Satan on the wills of others. The life in which reigns Christ crucified will attract to Him, leading to true revival and bringing in the day of His appearing. Do we see it? The spirit of the Cross from Bethlehem to Jerusalem animated the Lord Jesus, and that is going to win. Learning by the Holy Spirit to die to all the workings and standards of the old man and to live in Christ and have Christ in us, that will make awakening impressions upon those we touch. Christ in the heart conquers, and Christ in the heart is Calvary's aim for men today. "If it is Christ in the morning," said the late Doctor Smellie, of Carluke, Scotland, "it is Christ at noon and Christ in the evening. Christ without intermission until the race is run. In faith we receive Him at the first; in faith we go on receiving Him to the last." And receiving Him, taking in the life of the Head for daily witness here, enables us to show forth Christ and cause the world to see Him as Saviour and Lord:

"O God, work into me and out of me the power of the Cross, whatever it costs. Make me a man, a woman, in whose life and ways the world will see Christ, and the glory of His sacrifice on the Cross, and find the path that leads to His feet and heart and throne."

If in the light of the message of the Cross we have been made sensible by the Holy Spirit of failure, if we think of others to whom we have given a wrong impression of Christ, if we remember occasions and circumstances when we led others to misjudge or misunderstand Him, then let us come now to the very feet of the Lord and ask that the Holy Spirit may change all this, giving us power to redeem the time we have lost and causing the character of the Lord Jesus Christ to be retrieved in the eyes of men and women.

# X

## THE FRUIT OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE

"From the brightness of the glory,
'Go ye forth,' He said;
'Heal the sick and cleanse the lepers,
Raise the dead.
Freely give I thee the treasure,
Freely give the same;
Take no store of gold or silver,
Take my Name.'"

The aim of our Lord for each of His disciples is a fruitful life: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15:8).

And the secret of such an experience Paul gives us in those words to the Galatians: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless . . . Christ liveth in me."

What produces fruit? In nature it is the life of the tree flowing into every branch and twig. In Christian character, what is its source? "Without Me, ye can do nothing." And one of the greatest needs in Christian life is to understand that that is literally true. Fruit in the sphere of Christian discipleship does not come through the development of the physical or the natural. Nor is it the outcome of bodily energy, mental powers, or personal attractiveness. The late Dr. Andrew Murray, of South Africa, wrote, "No one knows what fruit is until he has learned to die to all that is merely human." That is a great statement, and cuts into the very root of all our work and pride in our work. "No one knows what fruit is

until he has learned to die to all that is merely human." How difficult it is to die to dependence on our own intellects, or to pride in our abilities, or to our reputation, or to our natural desire for success, or to self-made plans! But fruit comes when we are willing that all these should go to the Cross, while Christ becomes everything and we depend entirely on the Holy Spirit for every word we speak, every work we do, and every path of life we take.

A government official in India, who was engaged in irrigation work, came to the proprietor of a field and told him he was going to make it fruitful. To which the proprietor answered, "You need not attempt to do anything with my field; it is barren and will produce nothing."

The official replied, "I can make your field richly fruitful if it only lies low enough." And if you and I are willing to go down, down, down, Christ will fill us with what will bring forth fruit. The source of fruit in the believer's life is not himself, but Christ, and leading up to that point where it is possible to have fruit for God, Paul states certain great facts. The first is, "I am crucified with Christ." The "I" is the representative of the self-life, and has to be dealt with if fruit for God is to be gathered. We cannot tie on the Christian life to the old Adam nature, and therefore the fact of God is very clearly stated by the apostle, "Knowing this, that your old man was crucified with Christ" (Rom. 6:6). Of that fact Paul gives us the confirmation in his own experience, "I am crucified with Christ." Do we not see what requires to be done? Christ's Cross becomes our cross. We share with Christ death through the Cross to everything in us that is opposed to God, to His will, His purpose and His power, everything in us that shows the taint of sin and has on it the mark of the Fall.

And not only must the evil human nature be dealt with, but the good human nature as well, which thinks so much of its own merits and would rob Christ of the place He ought to have in our thoughts and in service. Whenever I consent to share Christ's Cross and allow the meaning of it to be worked out in me, in relation to the good as well as the evil in my human nature, then the way is open for the life of Christ to flow out. For, as we take up and maintain the attitude of death to each assertion of the self-life and attack of Satan, it gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to bring into us the life of Christ, setting us free from the law of sin and death. Christ and I are co-crucified.

But this co-crucifixion is not the goal of the fruit-bearing life. It is the starting point, the focal point of Christian experience, and as we get there we find all the other truths of God falling into their right place in perfect harmony. And what then? "I live." That is the interesting paradox stated by Paul: "I am crucified . . . nevertheless I live." Co-crucifixion with Christ does not create a religious machine. I live. A new "I," quickened by the Holy Spirit, raised with Christ, and seated with Him in the heavenlies, appears, and as Ellicott states in his commentary, "The fact is that I live in a truer sense than ever." I live all the more because I have died with Christ and the roots of my new life are in the Cross, in contrast to the old life the roots of which are in the Adam nature.

And what then? A second paradox is given us by the apostle. "I live, yet not I." That, also, is true. The spring and center of my life, its source, its power over the old nature, its strength for daily service are not in me, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I."

What is the center, and the source? "Christ liveth in me." Here is the secret of entering into the magnificence of Christ's salvation, and if we ever yield to the temptation of limiting the place of Christ in our lives, we limit our experience of His redeeming grace. But if Christ is in me, I give Him the Lordship over my being, obeying Him in small as well as in great things, what a life is possible! There is power here to be what God means us and needs us to be. Power is here to live the highest and reach the best in the practice of daily life.

There appeared some time ago in a religious magazine, an address by a well-known speaker, entitled, "The dishonored ideals of Christian life," and I suppose there is no believer living in whose memory conscience does not push frequently forward the remembrance of some dishonored ideal which shames him, some aim, some ambition he once pursued, the greatness of which flooded his soul with glory, but through some weakness, sin or failure, it left him far behind. That, no doubt, is true; I should think it is undeniably true. But what is most true with most of us is this: that either our ideals of the Christian life are so poor as to be incapable of drawing the best out of us, or we find that we have so little power that we cannot reach those ideals and make actual in daily experience what we dimly see is possible for us.

Now, God never talks to us as men talk to one another. God never tells us to be the architects of our own lives. What He does is to hold up before us His ideal, and to declare that the lifelong task of the believer set before him in the Word of God is to apprehend that for which he has been apprehended in Christ, making every truth in Scripture a realized and experimental fact. Oh, how powerless much of our Christian living is! How dull are

our imaginations as to what God really wants us to be! What dimness of faith prevents us from gathering to ourselves those mighty spiritual forces which could help us to lay hold of the riches and the treasures that are in Christ Jesus if we only believed they were possible for us! There is a power here to reach that ideal, to win those things, and to live gloriously for God, and is it not this: "Christ liveth in me"? And what Christ needs of us He first of all provides, for one of the greatest axioms of the Christian life is to make true in ourselves what is already true for us in Christ. The secret of this new life and the source of it is the Cross. Christ and the Cross are inseparable. Just in the measure in which we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit to accomplish in us the work of the Cross, does Christ find it possible to make this real, "Christ liveth in me," and apart from the Cross it never can be true.

What then is the outcome of it? "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God," or as Conybeare puts it: "My outward life which still remains, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Let us be clear about this matter. It is the fruit of the crucified life for which God is looking, not the fruit of the natural life, for it can produce no fruit for God. Neither let us confuse that fruit with human goodness. Any one, any pagan, heathen, or man of the world, can live a beautiful natural life for which he does not need Christ and in which he gives no place to Christ. God is looking for something very different from that. He seeks fruit that will abide, fruit of character, which will testify to the power of His Son, fruit by which He will be enabled to feed the nations. Only the crucified life can produce that. Listen to Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I,

but Christ liveth in me," that is the triumphant assertion of a man who has gone into the place of death with Christ and has risen again. Resurrection life, outcome of crucifixion, is the life which alone can bring forth fruit for God, and such a life manifests clear and distinct features.

What are they? What does the Holy Spirit show us? Remember, only as we are in co-operation with Him can we bring forth the fruit of the crucified life. The moment we come to the Cross, taking up the attitude of being willing for the Holy Spirit to work in us the purpose of the death of Christ, we touch the point of contact and make it possible for Him to enter into an alliance with us, for the believer's true life, which is the life of Christ in him, is ever springing up out of death. What is this life that we can live? What is the fruit of the crucified life?

I. It is a life with one great passion. "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:3).

Let us notice that Paul begins again to use the capital "I," but it is the new I which has been to the Cross and has risen. The first outcome of that is a life throbbing with a great passion. And what was the apostle's passion? To preach Jesus Christ, and if you refer to 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10, you get the Christ that Paul preached; a Saviour from sin, One who was living and was sure to come again, and in the interval was able to deliver lives from bondage. The crucified life must preach of and witness to Christ. But what Christ? The Christ to whom the apostles gave witness. What Christ was that? The Christ of passion

and the Christ of power; the Christ of shed blood and the Christ of coming glory. To save it from spiritual death and bankruptcy, the church stands sorely in need of this passion, impelling her to preach a great Christ, a true Christ, not a false Christ, not a Christ of human imagination, not one without a Cross. God's Christ is the Christ of Calvary, and the mark of every false prophet and every false religion is the preaching of a Christ who has no Cross. To preach this Christ of the apostle is what the world requires to be convinced that, if it does not turn to Him, it is doomed.

A passion for Christ! To present Christ that men may seek Him! Do we understand the meaning of the word "passion?" It is something that grips us, setting us on fire and eating into our vitals, like the missionary who said, "I cannot sleep for thinking of my people," or like old John Welsh, of Scotland, centuries ago, who used to rise in the middle of the night to pray, and when his wife expostulated with him, replied, "O woman, I have three thousand souls in my parish, and I know not how it is with many of them." Have we that passion? What about the unsaved in our homes? The people in the pews of our church who are going on to eternity? Will they be saved or lost? Have we a passion for their salvation? Each time we enter a pulpit or meet someone, does the thought arrest us, "This man is going either to heaven or hell; am I concerned about him?"

Paul's passion was for the salvation of man and the exaltation of the Saviour. Often in a prison he was bound to soldiers. Yet there were saints in Caesar's household, the fruit, probably, of Paul's prison talks. Have we such a passion for the salvation of others? Can we pray for the one who hates us, who is a thorn in the

side, and something of a fetter to us? That passion, born at Calvary, overcomes all obstacles and moves out from the center linking itself on to the regions beyond. Missionaries are created at the Cross, and the passion to win lives for the Saviour is the explanation of the stream of men and women who, all through these wonderful ages up to this present hour, have gone forth to tell the world that this is the Christ who can save them, the Christ of the Cross, the Christ of the garden struggle, the Christ at the right hand of the Father bearing on Himself the marks of death, the Lamb that was slain. Oh, let us go to the Cross and take in the meaning of it. Let us yield ourselves to it for its purpose to be wrought out in us, and God will get this fruit out of our crucified lives.

II. The crucified life has one great purpose. "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:22-24), and "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

The consecration of the whole being to the accomplishment of God's will in spite of every hindrance is the aim on which the believer is to concentrate his power. In the way of Paul many difficulties made themselves apparent. The temptation to be moved by the shadow of affliction,

to allow legitimate and personal matters to gain a larger place in his mind than the call of God, the natural fear of opposition and trial, the likelihood of meeting death, all these things were in his path, but beyond each one of them he saw the Lord Jesus Christ, and his response to the vision was, "I am ready, ready not only to be bound but to die." To do the will of God, that is the great purpose of the crucified life. It means adversaries, in some directions shut doors, in others doors opening into experiences that will test and try us to the very utmost. Are we ready? Ah, only the man or woman who has caught the vision of Calvary and begun to understand its larger meaning, that it is God's pledge to His child of ultimate victory, will be able to say, "I am ready—ready not only to be bound but to die." God needs us to say it. Can we? As we look into home, business, church, or special work on the field, and think of all that may meet us in the way, are we willing to say, "Yes, I am ready; ready to do God's will?" He is counting on us for the days to come.

III. This life, that springs out of union with Christ, has one great program. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:25, 27).

To know and to manifest, under all circumstances and conditions, a steadfast, consistent life of victory is to give to the Lord deep satisfaction. The words of Paul to the church of Corinth are descriptive of a man gripped by a

spirit of intensity. Life that reveals Christ and seeks to accomplish His purpose is, according to the apostle, no child's play. He sees that it is a struggle, for he uses the word "strive," which in the Greek means "agonize." It is something that will tax strength and powers of endurance, and therefore he reminds us that we have to run, not uncertainly. It is an experience that will bring us into an atmosphere of difficulty and opposition, and he has no doubt as to its being a fight, but it is something in which victory can be gained, for he says, "I keep under my body." Now, how are we to win? Shall we just note in our memories Paul's significant expression, "Not I," in Galatians 2:20, where he shows the spring of the crucified life, and contrast that with this equally interesting phrase, "But I," as he asserts that this life is to be lived out in practice? "But I"—I have a part in it. What is it? "I keep under my body." The Greek word is very emphatic. It means literally to hit someone under the eye, to disable and subdue one. "I keep under my body," I give it a blow. I hit it under the eye. I disable it. I subdue it. How? "According to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21).

How does Christ subdue? "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

What power is that? The power of the Holy Spirit. And the cross is the instrument by which the Holy Spirit works to keep under the body, embracing the whole human nature, and to give us victory. By the continual appropriation of the power of the death of Christ, and its application to every assertion of evil through the body, we keep it in subjection. Calvary is the training place for

the spiritual fighter. He must go there again and again to keep himself fit, to ensure that the whole being, spirit, soul, and body, will be sanctified and made able to accomplish its proper function. By such means he can run, not as uncertainly, and fight, not as one that beateth the air. To such a program as that, Christ in His death and resurrection and from the glory is calling us.

IV. The crucified life has also one great plan. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13, 14).

Never to be content with present attainments or achievements, but to press on; never to relax and think one can take it easy in work; never to lose sight of Christ as He goes forth in all the great movements of His Father; never to hold back when the call comes to tread ways that may make the heart faint and fail, but to press on, that is the plan of God for the life He has redeemed. "I count not myself to have apprehended," says Paul, and the word "count" means to take an inventory. As the apostle looked over his life, taking an inventory of all he had gained since he met the Lord, he could not say there was nothing more to be desired or attained. Nay, one of the fruits of a crucified life is the very opposite of self-satisfaction. It is to see the poverty of life as compared with what it might have been, and to gain a deepening sense of need in the light of what is required. The man who takes an honest inventory of his Christian life, its attainments and achievements, may have much to be thankful for, but never so much as to cause him to rest satisfied. To yield

to the Holy Spirit for the purpose of the Cross to be wrought in us and the plan of God to be worked out through us is to get revelations, constant and clear, of what life has not, as well as what it has, and to recognize in their light the peril of not pressing on and pursuing the aims divinely set before us. One of the weaknesses of many a believer is his contentedness with a small Christian experience, and the call from Calvary continually sounds out, "Press on." In only one way can we resist and overcome this temptation, and that is by allowing the Holy Spirit to make clear to us the meaning of the death of Christ and then apply its power to deliver us from all such weaknesses.

V. One other feature of the crucified life, as revealed by Paul, is seen in its having one great persuasion. "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12).

The clear fact about the life that has entered into contact with God at the Cross is that it goes forth to proclaim certainties. Sometimes the apology is made for men at the present time who, in their pulpits, are making statements with regard to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian life in direct conflict with the truths of the Word of God, that they are seekers after the truth. It may be so, yet few on consideration will deny that the pulpit of the Christian church is no place for a seeker after the truth. The study is his place. The pulpit is for the man who can say, "I know." Andrew did not go to Peter and say, "We are seeking the Messiah." He said, "We have found Him," and the mark of the crucified life is that it proclaims certainties. A trumpet with an uncertain sound

is not for these confused and dark days. The man commissioned of God, with the mighty ordination of the pierced hands, is he who can say, "I know," and who adds, with joy of heart, "I am persuaded." Conviction follows certainty. There are no circumstances in which the believer may be placed where Christ will not prove Himself able to keep what has been committed unto Him.